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# History of Liberia

By

ABAYOMI KARNGA, B.A.,

K.C., G.C.O.S.A.

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1. Liberia - Hist.

Dr. Fredk. Starr  
Washington D.C.  
with author's best wishes

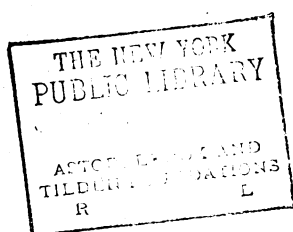
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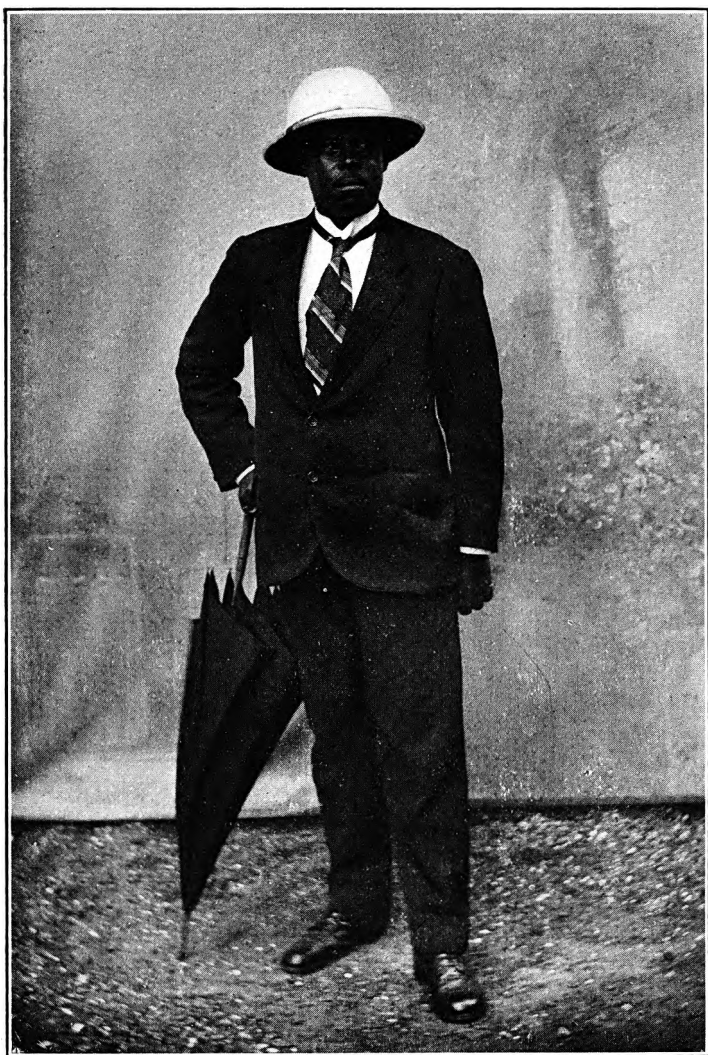
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# History of Liberia

By  
ABAYOMI KARNGA, B.A.,  
K.C., G.C.O.S.A.



*Author of*  
"A Guide to our Civil and Criminal Procedure,"  
and "Liberia before the New World."

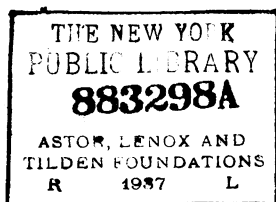
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MOY WEN  
CLUB  
YASSEL

*To the sacred memory of my father,  
Orangge, Prince of Solongo, Belgian  
Congo, my dear mother, Sarah Karna,  
my two sons, Abayomi and Tautla, and  
to my loving daughter, Olivia, this  
volume is most respectfully dedicated.*



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## NAMES OF AGENTS AND GOVERNORS OF LIBERIA.

<i>Names</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
1. Eli Ayers .....	January, 1822	April, 1822
2. Frederick James* .....	April, 1822	June, 1822
3. Elijah Johnson* .....	June, 1822	August, 1822
4. Jehudi Ashmun .....	August, 1822	June, 1828
5. Lott Carey* .....	June, 1828	December, 1828
6. Richard Randall .....	December, 1828	April, 1829
7. William Mechlin .....	April, 1829	September, 1834
8. John B. Pinney .....	September, 1834	February, 1835
9. Dr. Skinner .....	February, 1835	December, 1836
10. A. D. Williams* .....	December, 1836	October, 1839
11. Thomas Buchanan .....	October, 1839	September, 1841
12. Joseph J. Roberts* .....	September, 1841	July, 1847

\*Indicates Negro.

## NAMES OF PRESIDENTS AND VICE-PRESIDENTS OF LIBERIA.

<i>Name of Presidents</i>	<i>Residence</i>	<i>Inaugurated</i>	<i>Name of Vice-Presidents</i>
1 Joseph J. Roberts ...	Monrovia .....	January, 1848	Nathaniel Brander A. D. Williams Stephen A. Benson
2 Stephen A. Benson ..	Buchanan .....	January, 1856	Benjamin Y. Yates D. B. Warner
3 Daniel B. Warner ...	Monrovia .....	January, 1864	James Priest
4 James S. Payne .....	Monrovia .....	January, 1868	Joseph Gibson
5 Edward J. Roye*.....	Monrovia .....	January, 1870	James S. Smith
6 Joseph J. Roberts ...	Monrovia .....	January, 1872	A. W. Gardner
7 James S. Payne .....	Monrovia .....	January, 1876	Charles Harmon
8 A. W. Gardner .....	Edina .....	January, 1878	A. F. Russell
9 Alfred F. Russell.....	Clay Ashland.	January, 1883	
10 Hiliary R. Johnson...	Monrovia .....	January, 1884	James Thompson
11 Jos. J. Cheeseman*..	Edina .....	January, 1892	W. D. Coleman
12 William D. Colemant†	Clay Ashland.	January, 1898	Joseph J. Ross*
13 Garretson W. Gibson	Monrovia .....	January, 1902	Joseph Summerville
14 Arthur Barclay ....{	Monrovia .....	January, 1904	Joseph Summerville*
	Monrovia .....	January, 1908	James J. Dossen
15 Daniel E. Howard ...	Monrovia .....	January, 1912	Samuel G. Harmon
16 Charles D. B. King. {	Monrovia .....	January, 1920	Samuel A. Ross
	Monrovia .....	January, 1924	H. Too Wesley

\*Indicates died in Office.

†Indicates Resigned.



## PREFACE

It was Amiel who gave expression to the idea: "It is our duty to be useful, not according to our desires, but according to our powers." It is in this spirit that the present narrative has been written. It is this ideal which has inspired the writer to be useful to his country and his race. Whatever is contained herein is not intended to be the last word on the subject. The history of Liberia is still in the making. Our object is to bring together such traditions as are available and place them alongside the recorded efforts of our Ancestors for the benefit of our children and the succeeding generations.

Another object is to do something for ourselves. Not to depend so much upon the efforts of others, especially when the benefactor is either imperfectly informed on the subject, or not in sympathy with his protegee. History is a record of what man has done. At present our country has pretty nearly one million men, some of whom are doing something along their own peculiar line; and it behoves the remainder to also do something along other lines.

Our national ideals cannot be implanted in the minds and hearts of all our citizens by the constant inculcation into them of the thoughts and customs of other peoples to the sad neglect of our own. As a governing people we owe to ourselves the duty to know ourselves; to have a thorough knowledge of the customs and methods of government which have long existed among our forefathers. With such knowledge we may hope to govern ourselves with less misunderstanding and domestic trouble. With such knowledge we may hope that with

"God above our rights to prove,  
We will o'er all prevail."

It is a truism that Liberia will not develop so long as we persistently do little else but blindly copy from Europe or America. The country will develop only on lines natural to Africa. Our Government, our food, our clothing, our education, our thoughts and our church, must all be fashioned to suit Negro people living in Negro Africa. The sooner we do this the better for us and our posterity. The very first thing needed to be done is to cast out selfishness and narrow jealousy, and broaden our national visions. The next in importance is to amend the Constitution by increasing the term of Presidential office from four to ten years with the proviso that no President can hold office for more than one term.

Do not become alarmed. You are thinking along European or American lines, who think our forefathers and their rulers were elected for life. Think about the masterly progress they made in those early days with that system and the very slow progress we are making with our present system. One of the principal causes for the country's slow advance is due to frequent elections of the President. Every such political upheaval throws the country back financially at least three years. It is remarkable that under a system of this kind we have made any national progress at all.

Another cause of our slow development as a nation is the lack of independent thought. Our national progress depends upon our independence of thought. All force in its ultimate issue is either thought, or the result of thought. And we cannot achieve anything until we understand the power in thought. That the Divine Essence manifests itself in thought and substance; and that the physical

Universe was created by thought, force and substance. Man like his Creator thinks first before he speaks. The Apostle John tells us of this thought force in the creation of this visible Universe. In the beginning was Consciousness—God—which manifests itself in the dual way of motion or thought and matter and substance. And that all things visible and invisible were created by thought force and without it there was not anything created that was created. (St. John's Gospel, chapter I., 1—3.)

It would appear, however, that this is the contrary with us. In Liberia we are afraid to think contrary to the white man. We like to think in terms of European or American thought—not African. If we are to make history, we must think in terms of Africa and not America. Unless we do this the Republic will also be placed in the position where it will be compelled to always face trenchant criticisms from the pen of our so-called European and American friends. What the white race wants is not to see us as first-class copyists, but to know what is in the back of our minds—originality. So long as we are afraid to produce our true selves, but only continue to copy blindly his ways of living, so long will he discount us. There are among the white race men and women who are true friends of the Negro race and who believe in the black man. But these are few in comparison to the army of Negrophobist among the same race. Land grabbers come as friends and develop into wolves in sheep's clothing. They also pose as advocates for the rights of native races without any true feelings of sympathy, or even being known or solicited by the natives. We allude to such persons as Henry Reeve, in England, and others in Europe and America.

In his book entitled "Black Republic," after posing as a great friend of the native races in Africa, Reeve calls upon England and France—England in particular—to swallow up the only home left to the black race. On page 175, he says: "It is manifestly impossible for England and France to tolerate an African, 'Alsatia,' or 'no man's land' on the boundaries of their own governed States." These are the words of a friend—an advocate for the recognition of the rights of native races in Africa—a friend who does not believe that the Negro forms part of the human race. He does not recognise the black man as a man. His home, his territory, his country—Africa—is regarded by him as "no man's land." Are not the Africans members of the human family? Are not the Africans true owners of Africa, or are they mere tenants on the estate of the white race?

No! the native races of Africa need no such friends; they need no such advocates for the recognition of their social or political rights in Africa. Africa is and will ever remain for the Africans, in spite of the great efforts of the land hungry white races.

And I shall make no attempt here to answer our so-called friend, for he has already received the full wages of his sins committed against Liberia and the native races of Africa. And any other false friends will be compensated in like manner by the God of Africa. Having brought his offerings to the altar of the God of Africa with unclean hands and a filthy heart, he fell dead before the altar. How terrible is the judgment of the God of Africa against the enemies of His chosen African children.

Liberia is visualizing: is awakening. There is a new Liberia, and in the words of Professor Starr, "a new energy is rising; the effects of efforts put forth by the nucleus which Delafosse himself (our friend?) recognises as existing in Liberia are being felt; contact with the outside world, with its stimulus, sympathies, and friendships, warrants the hope that the future Liberia will surpass the past."

ABAYOMI KARNGA.

## INTRODUCTION

It is not within the gift of every historian to write the history of any people as a complete whole. Such a quality comes as a peculiar endowment to rare personalities like Green or Wells—men who make history while writing history; for is not the discovery of such a new standpoint from which history should be written in itself an act of history making? Our author finds himself amongst circumstances of a similar caste. While during a very busy official and political life, of which the greater portion would still seem to be ahead, he has been figuring largely in the arena of the chequered life of his country; he has yet found time to lay to heart the principles which have swayed her destinies, and he has followed them up from the mist of native tradition on through the recorded fragments of zealous writers. The story, then, emerges out of this heterogeneous mass into the shapely form into which Mr. Karna presents it.

The initial idea is the necessity of our knowing ourselves; our depending less upon the exotic nostrums of strangers for our notions of government, of food, clothing, etc.; of our so fashioning our life as to conform it to the condition of a people living in Negro Africa. He feels, moreover, that with selfish considerations eliminated, the Presidential term of office under the Constitution lengthened, with the proviso that the same incumbent does not succeed himself, the country will have been placed in the way of achieving successfully its task of erecting a stable state.

The story opens with an assumption which, thanks to scientific research, is receiving favourable acceptance—that man's age upon this globe, and upon this continent of ours for the matter of that, is now not limited to the Bible chronology of about only 6,000 years ago; but that "9,000 years B.C. our forefathers inhabited these shores." The original home from which these African peoples travelled northward was in the region of the great lakes of Central Africa; and among one of the successive waves of people who took this northerly direction were the Golas, an apparently very virile stock in years gone by but now mostly decadent. Mr. Karna believes that the Golas found already living along the coast-belt had probably descended to the coast at a time when the Negro race was emerging into view about some 100,000 years B.C.—an age which the archæological research of the African Society would rather tend to confirm. In fact, the result of these researches as well as the skull of a pethicanthropus recently found at Taungs seem to bear out the theory of Africa being the home of the first species of the human race evolved.

The object of writing this book being to bring the African mind to a knowledge of, and to inspire respect for, his early beginnings, civilisation and racial tradition, our author lays much value by those works like Lady Lugard's *Tropical Dependency*, which set off this civilisation in its best light. Besides the truly Negro civilisations of the Upper Nile region and other parts of Africa, an instance of another relic can be found in the remains of the wall built by the Kumbas extending from Cape Mount to the middle of Gizf country, and still to be seen.

Subsequent waves of immigrants worked their way upwards, subjugating the descendants of the first settlers, and then built for themselves a kingdom from the Sulima River on the west to the Cavalla on the east. These later invaders, fierce looking and growing long hair on their heads, breasts, arms and legs, introduced among the bushmen the arts of farming, fishing and cattle raising. And while

not yet acquainted with the white man, they made their own canoes for travelling upon rivers and lakes, wore clothing made from skins of the animals they had killed, and introduced the system of market trading between themselves and neighbouring peoples.

Still another wave of invaders descended to the sea coast some time about 6,000 B.C. consisting of spearmen, warriors, etc., from Central Africa, under the leadership of Manu or Mani, Kanga and Qua or Kumba, who probably built the great wall already mentioned.

With cogent reasoning the lie is also given here to the assumption that it was the Arabs who introduced into Africa the art of cotton spinning and weaving, as they neither introduced wool-bearing sheep nor called attention to the use of hemp fibre which was always widely known in Africa for the purpose of weaving.

The third chapter, devoted to the subject of religion, is very inspiring. The early form of religion among the early peoples of Liberia was pure spiritualism, with all the trappings of that cult. The simple notions which contributed towards the building of such a religious fabric appear so ridiculous to the superficial westerner that he usually dismisses the subject as the outcome of a tissue of superstitious beliefs. These superstitious beliefs, however, yield much that is valuable to the patient scientific investigator, who discovers in them the first awakening of the primitive mind to a realisation of his relation towards a Supreme Being. The basic element in this cult is, therefore, the belief in a Supreme Spirit, God, the causation of all material things, and who manifests himself in natural phenomena—rocks, caves, trees, animals, water, sacred groves, the sun, moon, spirits of departed ancestors—in short, a kind of modified polytheism in essence. Even the ancient Greeks and the Hebrews exhibit traces of this early awakening towards this quasi-polytheistic idea. But the African never at any time identified these natural abodes with the spirit himself. There was never any cutting or scratching of himself in calling upon Baal. In case of dire necessity which called forth prayer, it was not to these material *shelters* that he addressed himself, but rather directly to the spirit himself whom he abstracted for the moment from the abode and appealed to, in the direction of the rising sun. Here, again, it was not to the rising sun that obeisance was sought to be rendered, but rather in the intense concentration of his being, out of the depth of his feeling, forgetful of the existence of the glowing luminary for the time, he poured forth, as it were, his soul to the Supreme Ruler of all things and craved protection and direction of his infinite goodness.

To accept the theory of the evolutionist, Africa was the theatre upon which the metamorphosis of the man-ape into man took place: it was the birth-place of human speech; the nursing ground of primeval notions of life, religion and, later, of the early civilisation which originated in the kingdom of Ethiopia. Their religious ideas could not therefore be reasonably accepted to be the senseless representation of them that we usually get from amateur writers on the subject.

There is much to instruct under the heading of ordeals—Palm oil, whip, soapstone, etc., and Mr. Karnga has drawn very generously upon current tradition for most of this material.

With the fifth chapter begins the historic portion of his narrative. Here, too, our author does not fail to charm his readers with the interestingness of his account whilst he also instructs. The tracing of the origins and tribal affinities of such interesting peoples as the Gissis, Mendis, Gbandis, Buzis and Mahs, which began in the preceding chapter, is continued to include the well-known historic stocks as the Vais, the Mandingoes, the Krus, the Greboes, the Congoes, the Bassas and the Eboes in Liberia. This matter is, perhaps, for the first time brought into a history of Liberia; and the student may now study the

fact with profit. There is one little coincident which, however, requires to be further elucidated—how it transpires that the Mandingo seems traditionally to be the stock whence come (besides the Vais) the Buzis and the Gbandis and yet these latter two are classed in a group distinct from that in which the former is set down. Again there are certain linguistic points which tend to correlate the peoples from the Kpellli or Kpessi belt on to the lower Cavalla to the south east. These similarities are more pronounced as one travels south-eastward towards the lower Cavalla; also in the Buzi on to the Mendli sections there are expressions which tend to connect most of the hinterland dialects with the coast tongues. Such, for instance, are the names for *horse*, *spoon* and the conjunction *but*, which are practically the same in those tongues. All these facts seem to point to the uselessness of any hard and fast method of groupings, as with closer study and nearer acquaintance it may be found that many more of these tribes than are presently suspected shade into one another and so render former divisions any longer inapplicable.

We come now to the eighth chapter which takes up the story from the time of the arrival of the first immigrants, and their early dealings with the aboriginal kingdoms found on these shores. We see from this that one of the redeeming qualities in the establishment of the new Government was that there was no interference with the internal workings of the institutions of the country. The people were industrious, thrifty and genial; and the women had no other object but to please their husbands. Their lands were cultivated and everything presented a happy prospect. Their relations even with the new colonists were all that was desirable; but this state of things was soon disrupted by the machinations of the slave traders Pedro and Canot, who felt their interests at stake should the slave trade be entirely suppressed by the settlers. They therefore spared no pains in causing estrangement between the colonists and their aboriginal brethren, with the result that on the 11th November, 1822, hostilities broke out between the colonists and the Dehs. The first actions fought on that day left the colonists with the advantage, the Dehs being beaten back with great loss. This battle is known in Liberian History as the battle of Crown Hill, taking its name from the eastern spur of the hill on which Monrovia is built. The decisive battle was yet to be fought, which would decide definitely whether the colonists would be exterminated or whether, completely foiled, the tribesmen would be hurled back upon themselves, thus establishing for all times the religious and civilised leadership of this handful of colonists among the varied tribes of West Africa. This memorable battle was fought on the 1st December, 1822, when the well-famed Mrs. Matilda Newport with a lighted coal from her pipe put fire to a cannon which went off with such a terrific boom and rather scared away, than did actual harm to, the massed and determined Dehs. The victory was now complete and the Government of the colonists, which in 1847 took a Republican form, was thenceforth to be a serious factor in the future life of Africa.

With these wars at an end, the general Treaty was concluded with the tribes, the main principle of which provided that the lands ceded to the colonists should not be bartered away to any foreign Government or people. This it was which inspired the basic idea of our Constitution barring the privilege of citizenship, and incidentally of landed proprietorship, against all but Negroes or persons of Negro descent.

We next enter upon the Constitutional period during which the names of "Monrovia" and even "Liberia" were assumed for respectively the Capital and the country. It also saw the clearing of the Bassa Coast of the slave dealers and finally evolved, amidst those tumultuous times, a Constitution which has remained the guiding star of the



Liberian democracy. The period was also by no means free from foreign opposition which was based upon the notion of Liberia being more of a philanthropical experiment rather than a serious establishment of government. The Sierra Leone Government shared this view and encouraged British traders to disregard Liberian revenue regulations. America was appealed to in vain to mediate, and the Colonisation Society of America, under whose ægis the Liberian experiment was being conducted, finally abandoned the colonists to their own fate by a formal declaration on the 1st January, 1846. In this connection it will be well to mention that the initial idea of bringing off the freed slaves from America was not philanthropic or altruistic; it was an economic necessity, as these ex-slaves were thought to be unbearable and the strong desire was to get rid of them. It was during the preliminary discussion stage of the matter that the philanthropic idea crept in and, having been warmly taken up, was finally adopted and pursued.

This period also witnessed the birth of our political parties, and the Republican Party, representing the "best brain and blood" at that time, carried everything before it. But, as our author points out, its leaders made mistakes at the outset of their career. The Constitution that had just been adopted, having been framed and worked by the gifted American law authority, Simon Greenleaf, in America, was not evolved out of conditions Liberian. Evidently the Republican leaders had not had time to study the deleterious effect which would result to an already poor community like theirs from the biennial upheavals of general elections towards the running of which the state coffers had to contribute. A further result was that these frequent drafts upon the exchequer in favour of partizans encouraged the existence of a class of place seekers, who took more to living by their wits than to the soil or other useful industrial occupations.

Another far-reaching mistake made by these early colonists was the outcome of a peculiar mentality by which they regarded themselves superior to their aboriginal brethren and would not as much as ally themselves to these latter. The leaders of the Republican Party, therefore, in keeping with this mentality, had little or nothing to do with the great tribes of the interior living beyond a radius of roughly forty miles. Even when in later years the Liberian explorer, B. J. K. Anderson, warned the Government at Monrovia to occupy Musadu and gain possession of the great marts of that region, his words fell upon deaf ears and were regarded as the incoherent babbling of a simple visionary. It is only in very recent years that the meaning of the loss of these territories to the French is borne home to the modern Liberian, who begins to realise that it is useless clinging to a littoral without any hinterland. Recent administrations are therefore now operating upon the idea of a closer co-operation between the great tribes of the interior and the descendants of the colonists living on the coast belt.

As time went on, there crept up to the surface among the colonists a sort of mental revolt from white domination, which they considered the Roberts' administration to represent. Roberts, the first President of the newly created Republic, was an octoroon; and, although he had rendered invaluable service by securing recognition from both the British and French Governments for the new Liberian State, the majority of the colonists nevertheless felt him to be something of a scarecrow at the head of the Government. Colonel Brown incisively summed up this situation in a conversation he was reported by a Mr. Thomas, an American officer, in his book *West Coast of Africa*, to have had ashore with the latter, in these words: "The folks will think as how we darkies aint fitten to take care o' ourselves—aint capable. Roberts is a very fine gentleman, but he is more white than black. Benson's 'coloured people all over' . . . . I vote for Benson, sir, 'cause I wants to know if (sic) we's going to stay nigger

or turn monkey." Thus, in 1855, the polling brought forward Stephen Allen Benson, of Buchanan, in Grand Bassa County, a full-blooded Negro as President, and another in the person of Daniel Bashiel Warner, of Monrovia, as his vice.

About three years afterwards the stream of repatriating and recaptured Congoes set in. This new birth of immigrants, who in after years were to figure prominently in Liberian political life, holding in their hands the balance of power between the political parties, had their original home in the Congo River, French and Belgian Congo. Thence they were torn away by the ravages of the slave trade; and those of them that were recaptured by English and American war ships while being conveyed to the South American plantations were brought to Liberia and dumped down. To this circumstance is due the presence in Liberia and Freetown of the Congoes found there.

It is when we take up the consideration of the facts leading up to the annexation by Liberia of the former state of Maryland (known now as Maryland County or Cape Palmas) that we have to sympathise with our author. His story relies wholly upon official narration; but how often has this not been found here and there to be but a distortion of the actual facts in the case? The aboriginal version however is that a man of their tribe named *Nyuu Nemle Sie* of the *Gyidabo* family had been accused of witchcraft. He escaped from the country, subsequently turning up at Freetown, Sierra Leone, where, by the way, is to be found a street known as "Cape Palmas Street." Later, *Sie* turned up at home accompanied by the first batch of immigrants to that place whom, as he explained, he had induced to come and settle in his country. The settlers were so gladly received, as bearing the light to them, that the Gedebo householders agreed to give up all their houses but one to accommodate the strangers, in case where a man possessed more than one wife and consequently more than one house. Food and other means of comfort were provided for the strangers. This state of things continued in spite of many acts of annoyance and ingratitude for twenty-two years from the date of the first landing of the colonists until a rupture came about in 1856, culminating in the burning down of the native villages during their absence to their rice farms. This act proved to be the *casus belli*, and the natives who could not gain access to their houses and had to encamp on the outskirts were further pursued. The battle of the Shepard Lake was the decisive struggle in that war and resulted in a signal defeat to the reinforced colonists.

We now stumble upon more pleasant reading as we turn away from accounts of political upheavals to consider the progress made in the early days on the farm and at other industrial activities. Yams were produced weighing 300 lb., 280 lb. and 200 lb. each—a statement which would nowadays produce a smile of incredulity. Cotton produced and baled did not fail to figure also among the articles raised on the farm. Liberian shipping plied between not only Liberian ports but was also to be seen in the ports of Liverpool and New York laden with sugar, syrup and cotton cargoes.

Now looking interiorwards, we follow out the extension of our territories under James S. Payne's Presidency, and the memorable but misunderstood and unappreciated journeys of B. J. K. Anderson, rendered effete from lack of support.

The Government now begins to crystallise into a more stable form; and the political parties spring into good working condition—first, the Republicans, composed mostly of the mulattoes, and undergoing varied transformations from the *True Liberian* party to the later Republican Party; and secondly, the *True Whig* party which, representing the Negro sentiment of the country, started on its career as the *Old Whigs'* Party. The struggle of these two parties which at one time reached

its climax in the Revolution of 1871, engineered by the mulattoes, furnishes a general but correct insight into the typical Liberian politics. To this period belongs the real progress in most directions that the country has made. The interior claims no small amount of attention. President Coleman's administration ushers in this period who, in his own brusque way of dealing with things, became the pioneer of our interior policy of to-day.

Dr. G. W. Gibson succeeded Mr. Coleman, and his work was to hold the country intact. A good, old Christian gentleman, Mr. Gibson recoiled from anything which betrayed a predatory appearance, with the result that his administration was marked by a state of blissful calm.

Mr. Barclay, who now followed Mr. Gibson, having figured in preceding administrations, had gathered a stock of useful experience which he threw with laudable thoroughness into the work of his Government. He was alive to every interest of the country, and worked like a Titan to promote its welfare all he knew best. To sum up in a few words his administration represented the Augustan age of Liberia after that period. His fame will live in Liberian history as the man who first opened to the aborigines of the country the door to Government preferments.

With Mr. Howard's advent into office, the temple of Janus was flung wide open; it was a turbulent time. In fact, it may be said with truthfulness that the storm which raged about his administration was by far out of all proportion to the real good achieved. One conspicuous blessing, however, which the country derived from his ruthless ways was the disarming of the native population of the country, thus towards the close of his administration bringing in peace and preparing the way for material progress of which the harvest time has come about in the succeeding administration.

Mr. Karnga's story is brought up-to-date, and has given a comprehensive but by no means lavish estimate of our level-headed President. The influence of genius so remarkable in his character has received pointed references in Mr. Karnga's delineation; and when the full history of this period comes to be written, which we shall await with eagerness in the first revision of this work, let us hope that the full measure of justice due to President King's work, his personality and influence upon his time and country, will be displayed in their true colour.

N. B. SETON.

Monrovia, Liberia,  
June, 1925.

# History of Liberia

## Period I.

From the Conquest of the Golas to  
the founding of the Empire Republic

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### CHAPTER I.

#### Prehistoric Age.

Some nine thousand years before Christ, our forefathers inhabited these shores, the highlands and plateaux of Liberia. Their original home was in the regions near the Great Lakes in Central Africa. They came in successive waves. The first of the invaders who came here were the Golas. The exact time of their coming is not known. When they came they met tribes of people who were living in these regions many centuries before them. These latter tribes must have descended on the coast region during the formation of the Negro race about one hundred thousand years before Christ. These bushmen dwelt in caves and the hollows of large trees, and lived on fruits and roots of wild trees. The Negro race is believed to be the oldest race now living on earth. Geologists and other scientific men, who are in a position to judge, have come to the conclusion that the Negro race existed one hundred and fifty thousand years before Christ. They have collected much evidence in support of this opinion. One is that, "in the Grotte des enfants, near Mentone, in the South of France, were found buried, twenty-five feet below the surface stratum of the cave, a mother and son of distinct negroid features. There were three interments representing different ages above them, the one next being a cromagnon man six feet two and a half inches in height."

According to Penck's chronology the age of the remains must be assigned to the beginning of the third inter-glacial phase. This lasted one hundred thousand years, and was of course anterior to the Neolithic age, which is given at a maximum of twenty-five thousand years. In German East Africa there were discovered, in 1913, or early 1914, human remains buried in the fourth of five strata opened up. This individual, which was negroid, and with filed teeth, seemed to have been drowned, and not to have received formal burial.

The discoverer, Dr. Hans Reck, estimated the age of the remains at one hundred and fifty thousand years. (1)

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NOTE (1).—See "Journal of the African Society,"  
No. LXXIII., Vol. XIX., p. 23.

Lady Lugard observes: "When the history of Negroland comes to be written in detail, it may be found that the kingdoms lying towards the eastern end of the Sudan were the homes of races who inspired rather than received the traditions of civilisation associated for us with the name of ancient Egypt. For they cover on either side of the Upper Nile, between the latitudes of 10 degrees and 7 degrees, territories on which are found monuments more ancient than the oldest Egyptian monuments. If this should prove to be the case, and the civilised be forced to recognise in a black people the parent of its original enlightenment, then it may happen that we shall have to revise entirely our view of the Black races, and regard those who now exist as the decadent representatives of an ancient forgotten era, rather than as the embryonic possibility of an era yet to come."\*

At Grand Cape Mount, in our northern county, there is an ancient wall covering over fifty miles, which extends from the Atlantic Ocean through lake Piso to the northern section of the Gissi tribe. It is said that this ancient wall has existed over one hundred generations before 1822. It is supposed to have been built during the days of the old empire of the Kumbas.

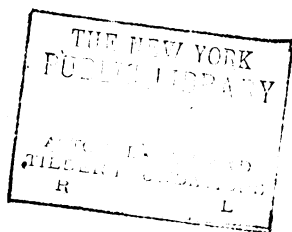
These discoveries are here cited as some facts in support of the opinion that the Negro race appeared on this earth many, many thousand years before the other races of mankind. (1)

The race is believed to have originally consisted of seven groups and speaking seven languages. The groups were subsequently dispersed over the Continent, some of them reaching as far as the Atlantic coast. Many, many centuries after this time, came another wave of invaders consisting of Golas, and some other tribes. They conquered the descendants of the first settlers and then built for themselves a kingdom extending from the Sulima river on the west to the Cavalla on the east. The invaders were strong and fierce-looking people. They grew long hair on their heads, breasts, arms, and legs. They introduced among the Bushmen the art of farming, fishing, and cattle raising. They made canoes for travelling over the rivers and lakes, and wore for clothing the skins of wild animals they had killed. They also introduced the system of market trading between themselves and other neighbouring tribes. At this time they had not come into contact with either the white or the yellow race.

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\*NOTE.—See Lady Lugard, "Tropical Independence," page 17.

NOTE (1).—See "Journal of the African Society,"  
No. LXXIII., Vol. XIX., p. 23.





**MOUNDS OR CAVES OF THE KUMBAS**

## CHAPTER II.

### The Kumbas.

About six thousand years before Christ, there came another wave of invaders to the coast, composed of spearmen, magicians, and warriors from Central Africa. These ferocious people came under the leadership of Manv, or Mani, Kanga and Qua or Kumba. Maybe their original home was in the ancient empire of the Great King Maniluango, or Maluango, or the empire of Monomotapa, or the realm of Undi. It is said they were ten years in their journey to the coast. They finally came in contact with the Golas and other neighbouring tribes, and after a hot battle the Golas were defeated, and the invaders became the rulers of the land. According to the tradition, this invasion occurred about six or seven thousand years before Christ.

After Manu's death his empire fell and from its ruins grew up several petty kingdoms. As the empire was composed of various elements, men taken from several tribes while on the journey to the coast, as well as people of the tribes whom he met, there also grew up distinct tribal groups known as Kpese, Buzi, Gbandi, Mendi, and Maa. All of these tribes belong to one single ethnological group. These people had customs alike and several things called by the same name may be traced in their languages. Thus the word for mother in Kpese, is *Nay*; Buzi, *Daye*; Gbandi, *Ndaye*; Mendi, *Yea*. The word for water in Kpese is, *Nyehi*, and exactly the same word is used by the Mendis and the Gbandis, while the Buzis make a slight variation; instead of calling water *Njehi*, they call it *Ziehi*, which is practically the same thing.

The word for *eat* in Kpese is *meh*, Mendi, *meh*, Gbandi, *meh*, Buzi, *mi*. The word for *drink* in Kpese is *kpayle*, Mendi, *kpoli*, Buzi, *kpole*, Gbandi, *kpoli*. The word for *liquor* in Kpese, is *ndohi*, Buzi, *ndohi*, Mendi, *ndoli*, Gbandi, *ndoli*. The word for *give*, *fe*, is the same in Kpese, Gbandi, Buzi and Mendi. The Maa pronounce these words like the Kpeses. There are several other things which are called exactly by the same name by these tribes.

The Golas and the Gissis were quite different people to the Kpese or Kumba group, and seem to be relics of the old stock of invaders who settled on these shores long before the arrival of King Manu and his followers known as the Kumbas.

The culture which they brought with them was simple enough, but by far in advance of the people they had conquered. They brought with them the philosophy of the Groves, together with the associated subjects of the seasons, the winds, the sacred rivers, the trees, and animals.

The form of Government which they established was elective Monarchy. The King was always elected by the elders and usually



from a family recognised by the tribe as a ruling family. Their Government was divided into four divisions, viz.: Executive, Legislative, Judiciary, and Military. The King was head of such division. In time of war he always led the army to battle, and in time of peace he presided over the meetings of each of the other departments. The King governed his people chiefly through his Vassals and Nobles. The legislative council consisted of one branch known as the council of elders, and was composed of only the princes and noblemen of the land. They held office for life by appointment from the King. The laws were made by the King and the elders in council.

All laws made by the council were carried out by the King, who was also the head of the judiciary. The council of elders performed both the duties of lawmakers and judges, and they were held in high esteem by the people.

There was also another institution that functioned in the affairs of the State. This body was called the Porro. The Porro was a secret organisation and used for the most part (beside its real secret order) in giving liberal education to the youths of the land. It taught also history, industry and the simple art of manufacture. As a political organisation the Porro was a very potent factor. The King was the supreme head; next to him was the Dazo, or the Grand Master. Every King had his own Dazo. The meeting of a legislative Porro was convened only upon the summons of the King. At the installation of a King two or more Dazos were always in attendance. The Porro was a national institution of great age, and had always served many good purposes when controlled by a good and patriotic King.

They built large towns and lived in houses made of long poles and daubed with mud, the roofs being covered with thatch, or leaves. The towns were more or less surrounded by two or more barricades as means of defence in time of war. The town took its name either from the founder or the river near which it was located. Names like Kangahun and Kangama in the Sierra Leone protectorate; Kanga at the French railway terminus in French Guinea; and Kanga in the County of Grand Cape Mount and Mano on the Manoh river and Ducoh on Mesurado river survive unto this day.

The land was cultivated, most of the Kumbas being agriculturists. Rice, corn, eddoes, yams, plantains, bananas, guinea corn, and cassadas were the principal foodstuffs. The palm oil was used also as one of the articles composing the main dishes for the table.

Fish baskets and other basket work were introduced. Some were made from creepers which grew on trees in the forest while others were made out of bamboo. Kinjas were made of barks of certain trees and the palm thatch. The women made earthenware vases, and pots. Wooden implements were also made by the people, such as arrows, wooden seats, pipes or small pots for tobacco and wooden sheaths for the sword.

Iron was wrought in quantities. The smiths had bellows made of earth, flat and round, with a long cylinder covered with goat skins and tied round the sides with ropes; a stick was fitted in the centre. The skin was usually made loose at the top, so that the working of the stick up and down produced a current of air. They used charcoal for fuel. As many of these invaders were adept spearmen, hunters and farmers, the smiths were always engaged in making iron pipes and spears, arrow-heads, hoes, knives, rings and iron rods of about ten inches long and round. These rods were used by the people as a medium of exchange in their trade. The art of weaving was also introduced. The Kings and the elders wore long gowns over their bodies and skull caps made of the fibre from the bamboo tree, monkey skins, or cloth. Hammocks were made of the fibre from the bamboo tree, and fishing nets of fibres from the palm thatch. Some foreign writers have suggested that the knowledge of spinning cotton and weaving it into cloth was brought to Africa by the Arabs from India. But this idea is unfounded. For if this were true, the Arabs would also have introduced breeds of wool-bearing sheep, or taught the Negro the idea of textile fabrics to be made with the hair or wool of other animals, or even the use of the hemp fibre, as the hemp is widespread throughout Negro Africa.

Markets were established on the outskirts of large towns for trading with residents of the same town or with other neighbouring towns and strangers. The iron rod and gourd were used as medium of exchange. Of course there was the barter system in vogue, for at that time the trade between the people of this region and Europe had not yet begun. It was not until the year 520 B.C. that they saw a white man. At this time, Hanno, the Carthaginian, and his sailors, in search of other trade markets, to increase the commerce of Carthage, reached as far as Grand Cape Mount. They met the Golas on the coast. It was these Gola people who grew so much hair on their bodies that Hanno saw and called them Gorillas. (2)

It is said that the Carthaginians traded with them, and took back to Carthage their ships laden with articles of merchandise.

The narrative given by Hanno of these people, shows them to have been sufficiently advanced in human development to know the use of fire, since at that period, two thousand five hundred years distance from the present day, they were burning up the dry grass and bush at the end of the rainy season, just as they do at the present time; and the sheets of flame on the grass plains and the fires that climbed Mount Kakulima filled the Carthaginian explorers with terror. (a)

After Hanno's first visit, and perhaps a few more voyages by other Carthaginian traders, it does not appear that the natives

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NOTE (2).—See Sir Harry Johnson's "Liberia," Vol. I., page 18.

NOTE (a).—See Sir Harry Johnson's "Liberia," Vol. I., page 21.

of this part of Africa came in further contact with the white race until some time in the fourteenth century of our era.

The articles which they sold or exchanged at this time for European goods consisted of pepper, hides, ivory, civet perfume, indigo, gum and fowls. Cotton goods were also shipped to Europe by them.

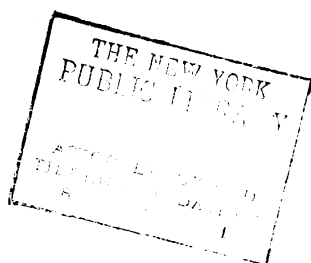
Sir Harry Johnson writes that: "The traditions of the Norman traders who visited Liberia in the fourteenth century and the authentic records of the Portuguese commerce with that country before 1460 and 1560, reveal a condition of civilisation and well-being amongst the untutored natives which is somewhat in contrast to what one finds on the same coast at the present day; still more in contrast with the condition of the Liberian coast lines in the early part of the nineteenth century; suggesting that the rapacity of the Europeans, combined with the slave trade, did much to brutalise and impoverish the coastal tribes of Liberia during the two hundred years between 1670 and 1870. They seem to have been well furnished with cattle, sheep, goats and fowl, to have carried on a good deal of agriculture, and not to have been such complete savages as were the natives of the still little-known parts of Portuguese Guinea, or the people of the Ivory coast, who were wild cannibals.

"To begin with a negative statement, there were no cotton goods, no calicoes in the holds of these vessels such as there would be nowadays. Strange to say, it was the natives of the Gambia and other rivers of Northern Guinea, and Cape Mount in Liberia that impressed the Europeans with the excellence of their cotton fabrics, and actually sent some cotton goods to Portugal." (b)

The European traders brought with them for the exchange of the native products beads, daggers, tin basins, mirrors, iron bars, tin pots, jugs of pewter and brass, swords, iron saucers and pails, small boxes, bells, gloves, axe-heads, brandy, blue and red coral and manilla (Spanish bracelets). These were the principal trade goods that came from Europe at this time. It is said that gunpowder was also included among these articles of trade, but as the tribes had not at this period been accustomed to the use of firearms, this class of article was not much sought after by them. They had no knowledge of the use of gun and gunpowder till later in the seventeenth century.

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NOTE (b).—See Sir Harry Johnson's "Liberia," Vol. I., pages 71-2.





**A GOLA WOMAN AND HER SON**

## CHAPTER III.

### Religion.

The religion which our forefathers adopted in those early days was a system known as Spiritualism. Spiritualism has existed in Africa from time immemorial. Every tribe had a priesthood of some kind. The rights were exercised by authorised persons having tribal recognition, and not by the King, except in the case of ancestor worship, when the head of the family performed such ceremonies. The foundation of this religion was based upon a simple creed—the belief in One Supreme God who is a Spirit; He created all things, and through His creation He manifests Himself; He is manifested in sacred trees, in rocks, in crocodiles; in sacred springs, wells, and groves; in the sun and moon; in creatures that live in the great deep waters; in the spirit of our ancestors, and in all the spirits that inhabit the universe; worship, therefore, we Him in spirit, through His creations.

They believed that the divine powers inhabit stones, trees, springs, and animals; and we have traces of this kind of worship in the Bible and in the early history of the Greeks. We find, for example, a sacred stone at Bethel, called the House of God. There is a sacred oracular tree at a place called Sichem (Gen. xii., 6). Then there are the sacred walls at Kedesh and at Beersheba to which people went to find God. In earliest times amongst the Greeks the image of a god was nothing but a mere stone which served to represent the Deity, and to which offerings were brought. This was the primary origin of altars. Though our forefathers bowed down to wood and stone, yet they did not look to the stone for help. (c) They recognised within and beyond that stone the Spirit of their Creator.

The Rev. R. J. Harrison, D.D., Vicar of St. Thomas', Newcastle, preached on the subject of "Spiritualism," taking his text from St. Luke, 16-31. He said: "God was a spirit, and if we worshipped Him we worshipped Him as a spirit. In the next place there was a spiritual universe in which the spirits were as real as the stars in heaven. In this spiritual universe there appeared to be constant movement. Men's eyes, in the Bible, were said to be opened and to have beheld the movement of great spiritual armies. Spiritual phenomena of real value were as broad as humanity and of everyday occurrence; but we have lost the power of recognising the phenomena. We had lost the faculty because we have not the inclination. The majority of us were not half good enough to be spiritualists. We thought more of eating and drinking than of fasting and prayer." (d)

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NOTE (c).—See Dr. Blyden's "African Life and Customs," pp. 68-69.

NOTE (d).—See Dr. Blyden's "African Life and Customs," page 72.

Professor Max Muller observed: "That Fetishism was a corruption of religion, in Africa as elsewhere; that the Negro is capable of higher religious ideas than the worship of stocks and stones, and that many tribes who believe in fetishes cherish at the same time very pure, very exalted, very true sentiments of the Deity. But the Portuguese, who were the earliest settlers in West Africa, not knowing what to make of that which they observed, but seeing that inanimate objects received marks of respect, called the religion of the natives idolatry. They said it was 'image' worship, and the word for amulet or charm being 'Feitico,' the word 'Fetishism' became in time incorporated in all European languages. It may be asked why the plain word 'idolatry' was not adhered to."

This was evidently because it was recognised by succeeding students that the worship was not purely that of an inanimate object. There was something behind it that needed distinction; and so a new word was called into use. The word, "Fetishism," has done much to obscure to Europeans the working of the mind of the Negro when directed away from the materialistic part of his daily life. (e). The Negro is not a worshipper of fetishism, nor animism. His religion is pure Spiritualism. He has existed many thousand centuries before the white and yellow races, and his religious ideas have penetrated throughout the whole world. "It is certain," says Dr. Blyden, "that religion originated in Africa. It went from Ethiopia, that is to say, from Negroland eastward and northward to Egypt and down the Nile, extending to the heart of Asia. All the representations of Buddha are painted in black."

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(e) See "Journal African Society," No. LXXIII., Vol. XIX., page 21.

## CHAPTER IV.

### The Ordeals.

Besides purely religious beliefs, there were other sets of beliefs current among our forefathers which went to swell up the body of the beliefs in the wonderful powers of natural phenomena. These were of a more or less economic character. Such were the beliefs in the virtue for good luck of certain objects; and also beliefs in ordeals for the detection of crime.

The ordeal was an ancient form of trial instituted by our ancestors to determine the guilt or innocence of a party who had been accused of committing some offence in the community. There were various methods adopted

**THE PALM OIL AND HOT IRON:** A three-legged iron cauldron was filled with palm oil and boiled on the fire. Three small iron rings were put into it; a collection of herbs and leaves was next made up and put into a basin beside it. The collection was oily. The medicine man took some of the mixture and rubbed it over the right hand of the person who was about to go through the ordeal. The party was then ordered to thrust his hand into the boiling oil and remove one of the rings in the pot. If he was successful he was then requested to place it into his mouth, and if it did not burn his mouth he was adjudged to be innocent. But if he was unable to do this without being burnt, this would be a sign of his guilt. He was then taken immediately to the Barri, or Court House, where his punishment was determined.

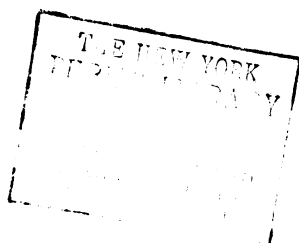
**THE GBATTOW, OR WHIP:** This ordeal was used more in matters where theft was committed, to ascertain the guilty party. A small handwhip was usually placed in the hand of a small boy. The medicine doctor then rubbed the boy's wrists, and the thongs of the whip, with a preparation of leaves and herbs. He then commanded the whip to go around the town and locate the offender and flog him until he confessed his guilt. The boy then proceeded to do this according to instructions, or until he was ordered to stop. The guilty one was next taken before his master for further punishment.

**THE NOMONIA, OR SOAPSTONE:** The Soapstone was one of the most important oracles consulted by the people. The Soapstone is of great antiquity. It was a stone carved by the ancient sculptors of the race who lived here about (5000) five thousand B.C. Now and again a few of these images are dug up from the earth. Several of these may be found in the far hinterland, and among the Golas and the Mendis. They are regarded by the people as altogether supernatural, and are therefore consulted upon questions of war, the getting of wealth, the procuring of good crops, and upon the success of a proposed distant journey. If one of



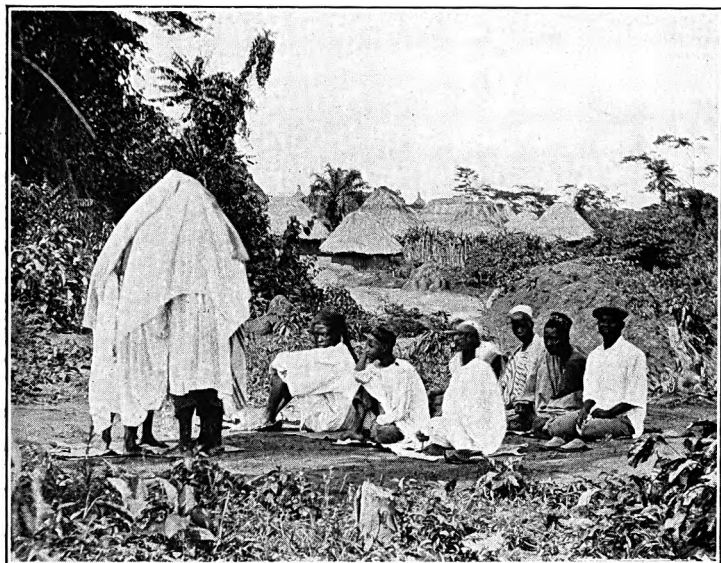
these images was secreted in a rice farm, it was believed that its presence would secure to the owner a crop double in quantity to the ordinary yield, and hence to possess one would be a great object of ambition.

A Seatite or Soapstone was believed to be attended by many satellites, who carried out its wishes. It was supposed to be very jealous, and if not treated with the utmost respect and propitiated by the owner with offerings of palm wine, rice and fowls, would bring certain trouble and ill-luck to him. Upon every occasion of his consultation rice-flour was to be first offered. When it was to be used for the purpose of increasing the crops in the farm, the Soapstone was most carefully hidden in some secret spot known only to the owner and his family. It was usually placed upon a small bamboo stool in a little house built of palm branches for the purpose. It had to be zealously guarded, for if it was discovered, and stolen, and the theft reported to the King, a fine was imposed on the thief for theft and on the owner for not notifying the King of having Nomonia, "the big man," as they called it, in his possession, and the owner forfeited the image.





**A KPESE TOWN**



**MANDINGOES AT PRAYER**

## CHAPTER V.

### The Coming of New Interior Tribes.

The Kwia, or Bele, group consists of the Gbetars, Gabos and Betus (all these being commonly known as "Kru"), the Bassas, the Des, the Gibis, the Mambas, and the Gbopoes or Gedeboes. All these spoke practically the same tongue, and could more or less understand each other. These tribes lived formerly in the interior of Africa before coming to the sea coast. Of these the Kwias, or Krus, came first (about A.D. 1505), while the Gbopoes or Gedeboes being impeded in their journey by fierce cannibal tribes, did not reach the coast until about 1550. The people we now know as Greboes were originally called Gbopoes. They came over to the place they now occupy by sea route under two leaders called Sie Mabli Jude, and Dudepo. The name Gedebo, or Grebo, was assumed after their arrival, and they were so called after the monkey on account of the agile manner in which they rode the angry waves of the ocean from the Ivory coast to Cape Palmas.

The Kwia group occupied the south-eastern end of Liberia. They built for themselves large bamboo houses near the seaside, and lived on hunting and fishing. Unlike the Kumba group, a portion of the Kwias, the Krus, were chiefly seafaring men. They lived chiefly on dogs, crabs, catfish and sharks. The best sailors in the country came from this group. Their religion was Spiritualism.

The Mandingo group consists of the Mandingoes, Konohs and Vais. The Vais descended on the coast first some time in the sixteenth (16th) century, under the leadership of Alhaj Humol and Umvalli. They came from the Sudan in search of a new home and to get to the sea. This band of invaders consisted of warriors, Mohammedan priests and magicians. After Humol's wife, Fatuma, died, he returned to his home without reaching the coast. Umvalli succeeded him and proceeded with the journey with the rest of his followers. They soon came into contact with the Golas.

Here in the north-western section of Grand Cape Mount a fierce battle was fought. The Golas in this section were defeated; a truce was then made by Bueh, King of all the Golas. The Golas afterwards agreed to give them a small tract of land to settle on. They were called Vai after the name of their leader—a corruption of the word Umvalli. The Vais were very intelligent and industrious. They were mostly merchants, traders and stewards, or domestics. Some time in the eighteenth (18th) century a system of syllabic writing was invented by them. It is said that Dualu Bukeleh was the original inventor. The Vais were also very

religious, and ardent believers in Mohammedanism, or Islam. The Mandingoes arrived in Liberia about the seventeenth (17th) century. Their original home was in the Kingdom of Melli in the Sudan. Perhaps this migration did not take place till after the Melli Kingdom had been destroyed by Ischia the Great, Emperor of Timbuctu, in the sixteenth century. The Kingdom of Melli was a Negro State and the first in the Sudan to accept the Islamic faith. This conversion took place about the ninth century. The name Mandingo is derived from the word Mellinkes, but subsequently corrupted by the French into Malinkes. They followed the Mohammedan religion. These people were very intelligent, proud, and industrious. They were also great traders and manufacturers. Their towns are interspersed among the tribes of northern Liberia.

After these invaders it does not seem that any more interior tribes descended on the coastal regions until 1822. These new arrivals consisted principally of Congoes and Eboes. They did not come after long journeys through the hinterland, as did the Kumbas and the Kwias. Many of them, having been kidnapped in their own home, and placed on board the Portuguese and Spanish slavers to be carried away into slavery, were taken off these slave vessels by the English and American warships, and landed on these shores. The first set was from an English prize-ship, which was wrecked in Mesurado bay in the early months of 1822. These assisted the Pioneer Fathers in founding the City of Monrovia.

As they were torn away from their original home by these heartless Portuguese and Spanish raiders, and settled in a strange country, provision was made by the Federal Government of the United States for their food, clothing, and education. Congress appropriated the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars per annum for the maintenance of each of these recaptured Africans. Upon their landing, they were immediately divided amongst the old Americo-Liberian settlers under the system known as the "apprenticeship," and all the money squandered. Little or no attention whatever was paid to their education or material development.

The first set of Congoes appeared on these shores in 1822, and from that time their number continued to increase by subsequent arrivals until 1860. Notwithstanding all their difficulties in a new country and repression by their guardians, they have made considerable progress in western civilisation—in education, in culture and industry. Considered as a tribe, they are most loyal to the State. They are brave, intelligent, prolific, diplomatic, and well versed in the art of politics. From 1877 they have held the balance between the Republicans and the Whigs, the two political parties in the country. Most of their leaders have been Whigs. Many of them have made their way to the National Legislature, the Senate and House. The first that received this political recognition was Daniel Ricks, of the township of Louisiana, Montserrado County.

He was elected to the House of Representatives at the second term of President Johnson, in that hotly contested political campaign of 1885. A. D. Williams ran as the Presidential candidate on the Republican ticket.

After Ricks, came William Brown, of the City of Monrovia. After him followed Thomas Berrian, of Dixville; then Augustus Deihl, of Harrisburg, then Alexander Mars, of Paynesville. The writer succeeded Mars in 1911, after a term of ten years. Mars was again returned to the House in 1919. Several have made their way to the Senate—J. W. Worrell, the senior Senator from Grand Bassa County; Zack Brown, the senior Senator from Sinoe County—and have done so with a large majority of votes from their constituents. Some have advanced to positions in the Executive; in the President's Cabinet; in the Judiciary—in the person of Judge E. J. Worrell, of Grand Bassa County, and Sheriff George B. Dixon, Montserrado County; and in the legal and military professions and in the church; while others are sawyers, farmers and merchants. The name Congo means a spear, and was applied to this tribe on account of the frequent use of this weapon in war.

There are other tribes which have made advancements in Western civilisation, and notably among them are the Vais, the Greboes, the Bassas and the Krus. The Right Reverend T. Momolu Gardiner, Suffragan Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church; Momolu Massaquoi, Consul General for Germany, and T. E. Beysolow, Associated Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia, are from the Vais. The Reverend M. P. K. Valentine, Member of the House of Representatives Seton, Vice-President Henry Too Wesley, N. B. Seton, F. W. Proud (who was the man to carry the Liberian Flag farthest in the Interior of Cape Palmas), H. Tiba Hodge, Representative Maryland County, Judge Martin N. Russell, of Grand Bassa, and N. H. S. Brownell, County Attorney for Montserrado County, are from the Greboes. Dr. B. W. Payne, Secretary of Public Instructions, Dr. Luke Anthony, Professor of Mathematics, Liberia College, and Dr. T. N. Lewis, of Grand Bassa County, are from the Bassas, while the Krus give the State, in addition to sailors, Professor P. G. Wollo, Didhwo Twe, D. D. Freeman and B. J. Davis. There are other individuals from other tribes with influence, grit and nerve, who have also made progress and advancement. Notably Solomon B. Mensah, from the Popo tribe, and one of the wealthiest and largest real estate owners in the country. Next to the Popoes are the Eboes. These have also made progress and advancement. Closely following the Eboes are the Akus. From this tribe we have C. D. B. King, our President. He was first elected in 1919. His father, C. T. O. King, had been a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for several years before his death.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Marriage Customs.

The marriage customs of the Kumbas and the other tribes were practically the same. The system resembles more the Hebrew system, where there was no fixed limit, only the general caution "not to multiply wives." This is quite unlike the Islamic system, where marriages are limited to four wives, who are considered legally entitled to all conjugal rights.

When a man sees a girl and desires her to be his wife, he usually makes the marriage contract with her parent or guardian, and not with the girl herself. But before he takes her to his domicile, she is usually taken into the Sande for instructions in domestic science, in all the normal and abnormal complaints and diseases to which women are liable, especially as wives and mothers. The Sande, or Bondo, is a national school for girls. No male pupils attend this school, and all the teachers are old and experienced women of the tribe. When the girl has passed through the prescribed course of training and has reached the marriage period, the man to whom she had been betrothed then "gives the mat" (pays the dowry). The articles which constitute the mat are never taken to the parents or family of the girl by any male member of the husband's family. This is done either by the mother, the aunt, or some near female relative of the man.

There are many important social advantages which accrue from this marriage system. Under this system there are no "women of the underworld," no "creature of the abyss," no "first wife of the well-to-do," and no "slave of the soul market," but every woman is taken care of, protected and sheltered. It is said that there are a little over five millions of unmarried women in Great Britain, and the number is increasing, and that in the city of London alone there are 80,000 professional outcasts. Another advantage which accrues from this system is that the mothers observe the regulation period of rest and reserve. Their children are not therefore "born tired, grow up tired, and have been tired ever since." (h)

The marriage customs among all the African tribes seem to be the same. But there appears to exist a slight difference in royal marriages among the tribes living in the northern and north-western parts of Africa and that among the Princes in the Congo country. That is to say, among the latter, the Princesses, whose offspring may become the future rulers of the kingdom, may not have more than one husband, whom she has the right to choose. He may be already married or not, but once selected, he must put

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NOTE (h).—See Dr. Blyden's "African Life and Customs," 1908.

away his other wives and become the slave of the princess, who has the power of life and death over him. But when she dies this man inherits all her property. Maluango so long as he is simply Nganga Nvumbu (high priest) may have as many wives as he pleases, but once he has been crowned Maluango he is supplied with one wife, a princess of Ngoio (Cabinda in Kakongo), and must put away the others.

The people generally are polygamists, but there is a line drawn between the first wife and the others. The first is called Nkaci Ntete, the second and others Nkaci Sialila. A concubine is called Ndaia Xicinsu. An unchaste woman Ndumba.

Polyandry has not the legal character that it has among certain primitive peoples. With regard to polygamy and its effect upon the condition of the women, it is true that, apparently, certain women have always existed in this country who object very strongly to sharing a husband with others, and such are said to be bad women, or women of spirit, Muntu 'Mbi. But as a rule the first wife asks her husband for women to help her in her work, and such woman is called a good woman or creature, Muntu 'Mbote. There are constant quarrels among these wives, but the husband refuses to take sides, and would be looked upon as a fool if he interfered. Should the injured woman in these disputes appeal to an outsider or judge, as an arbitrator, he will refuse to have anything to do with it. She has no appeal in these matters. Mankind generally treats the affair with indifference.

Should a man promise to marry a girl, she can make him pay very heavily for breach of promise if he has touched her; if not, she can only slang and shame him. The man, however, cannot claim anything from the woman who breaks off an engagement, but she gets a bad name.

If the woman whom the man desires to marry is past the age of puberty and is able to judge for herself as to a man's parts, the man will first address himself to her. If the girl is still a child, he goes to her father and mother in the first place. The proposal made, the father and mother discuss the matter. If they can find no objection to the young man and they think it well to allow their daughter to marry, they accept the young man's offer.

The young man then approaches his own parents, and if they do not object, the mother, who keeps her son's savings for him, gives him the goods necessary to present to his future father and mother-in-law. These goods are given to the girl's parents in order to give the man hold upon them in case they supply him with a worthless article as a wife. It covers their responsibility, which is a very great one, and gives the father the right, on the other hand, after returning the exact amount presented, to take his daughter away from the husband, should he turn out to be a beast and illtreat her. There are two "Marriage bundles": (1) Bukali, in the olden days 20 longs (say 10 francs) but now 100 longs and one demijohn of rum (say 60 francs). (2) Mpakete, in the olden days 10 longs but to-day consisting of 50 longs and one demijohn



of rum, one coat, one counterpane, one hat, 100 longs to mother's relations, and a present of 50 longs to the bride.

Certain families may not intermarry, as those of Xibanga and Maluango. Inter-tribal marriages were once totally prohibited, but to-day marriages take place although the offspring of such unions are looked upon much in the same prejudiced light by the Bavili as the offspring of black and white races is looked upon by the Europeans.

A woman who cannot plant is not allowed by her parents to marry. A known fool will not be accepted, and sickness is a bar. The goods bestowed on the parents of the proposed wife are called goods for marriage, Bindele Bi Kukwela, and not goods for barter, nor can the marriage be properly termed a marriage by purchase. The goods are accepted as a gage, or pledge, not as purchase money.

The "Bundle" having been given to the assenting parents, when the time comes or the girl arrives at the age of puberty, the bridegroom sends money to the parents so that the girl may be placed in the "paint house," where she undergoes certain rites of purification. The father's women-folk then take the girl to the water and the Tukula or red paint is beaten off her with pliant switches or twigs. Then she is dressed and adorned with leg and arm rings of brass, necklaces of coral and other ornaments, and taken to the expectant bridegroom. The dancing and singing that has commenced after the washing may be continued during the whole night. The husband gives certain presents to the father's relations who have brought him his bride. The next morning the husband presents his wife with a white handkerchief. Then the women again come and present the couple with food. The husband makes them a return present and the bride returns to her father's house. The husband then sends his father and mother to his father-in-law with a present to ask him to send him his wife. The father-in-law marks a day for her return to her husband, and gives certain presents to the father and mother of the husband, who return to their village. Upon the day mentioned, the father-in-law takes his daughter back to his son-in-law with a present. Then in the presence of the husband's father and mother he exhorts him to follow in his good father's footsteps; then turning to his daughter he gives her good advice, and hands her over finally to her husband.

The married couple now have two fathers and two mothers to whom they owe obedience and whom they must treat equally as members of one family, helping them all as children are expected to help their parents.

Should the woman be guilty of adultery, the man may forgive his wife the first offence, but on the second occasion he will return her to her father, who must return the "pledge" money given to him. Should he discover the guilty man, he may ask what indemnity he likes, and that man has to pay the fine even if he has to pawn himself as a hostage. The first time the husband is

caught by the wife he may be forgiven, but the next time the wife reports the matter to her husband's parents, and the man must pay. She may leave him for a time, but generally comes back to him. If not, and should it happen that the father finds her another husband, the pledge goes to her first husband. But the husband cannot make her father give back the original pledge. The wife has no claim on the woman who has committed adultery with her husband.

The male adulterer pays the fine, the husband alone inflicts it, and the amount is generally about equal to the pledge, but the actual amount rests with the husband.

As regards the duties of married persons, the woman plants, cooks, carries wood, and draws water; the man looks after the religious and fetish rites of the family, closely allied to the treatment of his sick relations, and their burial, finds his wife in dress, fish, the chase, palm nuts, etc., builds her house and cuts the bush where she may have decided to plant.

**DIVORCE.**—Apart from the causes already mentioned, long absence and non-support bring about divorce or dissolution of marriage. In this case the wife, after having waited, say, twelve months for the return of her husband, seeks his father and mother and puts the situation before them. They advise her, and if they give their consent she goes back to her father and may re-marry. Upon the reappearance of the first husband the "pledge" is returned to him. So that divorce is looked upon as a family matter.

In the event of the parties being unable to agree, the father returns the "pledge" and they are free to marry again.

If the children are very young they go with the mother, but the daughters remain with the mother in any case, while the sons when old enough to do without the mother's care go to the father. The father has to do his part in sustaining the children. (i)

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NOTE (i).—See Dennett's "At the Back of the Black Man's Mind," pp. 36-40.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Acquirement of Western Civilisation.

The word civilisation is derived from the Latin words *Cum* and *eo*, which means coming together or going together. The culture which is now known as western civilisation did not exist among our forefathers. They had culture of their own which they themselves evolved some thousands of years before they ever came in contact with either the white or yellow race. When the white race met them, they had already advanced in the science of medicine, law and politics. They had government of their own. The art of sculpture and weaving cotton into cloth was also known to them. They made images out of wood and stones, and many of them are still to be seen in the interior. There is an alligator carved out of stone near the town of Kanga in the County of Grand Cape Mount, called Maphoy, to which people went to find God. Even to this day offerings are taken to it by the people of the vicinity and strangers, and even missionaries on their journey through the hinterland are said to observe these rites. But western civilisation was introduced into the country by the Pioneer Fathers in 1822. Most of the Pioneer Fathers were immigrants from the United States of America. These immigrants were the descendants of the Africans, who had been kidnapped and stolen by the Portuguese and Spaniards and later by the French and English during the epoch known as the slave trade. It must be remembered, however, that the Negro is not the only race which has been in slavery, but all races on the face of the earth at some period of their existence have been in slavery.

The slave trade in Africa was commenced by the Arabs in the Middle Ages. As early as 1501, only nine years since the West India Islands had been discovered by Christopher Columbus, it was found that the wretched inhabitants of the Antilles were dying out under the treatment of the colonising Spaniards. In 1502, therefore, it was decided to export from Spain and Portugal to the West Indies some of the Negro slaves who had reached the Liberian peninsula from West Africa and had been converted to Christianity.

By 1503 there were already quite a number of Negroes in Hispaniola (Haiti and San Domingo). In 1510 Ferdinand, King of Spain, despatched more Negro slaves, obtained through the Portuguese from West Africa, to the mines in that island. The Spaniards at that time could not get slaves direct from Africa on account of the Papal Bull of Demarcation—an anticipation by Pope Alexander VI. in 1493 of our modern term "sphere of influence," from trespassing on the Portuguese sphere, which included the West coast of Africa. This was the reason why they

had to contract with the Portuguese directly or indirectly for the supply of Negro slaves.

The coasts of Liberia were not so much ravaged by the slave traders as were the regions between the Gambia and Sierra Leone, the Dahome (or Slave Coast), the Niger Delta, Old Calabar, Loango, and Congo. Perhaps in all the ravages which the over-sea slave trade brought about, the Niger Delta and the Lower Congo suffered the worst. What damage was done to the coast of Liberia seems to be chiefly attributed to the English, who had already begun to visit the coast at the close of the sixteenth century, and were very busy there all through the seventeenth. The French traveller, Villault de Bellefonds, mentions repeatedly in his writings the damage that the English did on the Liberian coast in attacking the natives for little or no cause, and in carrying them off as slaves. In fact, a slang term, "Panyar" (from the Portuguese word, "Apanhar," to seize, catch, kidnap) had sprung up in the coast jargon to illustrate the English methods. Even English travellers such as William Smith (who went out as a surveyor to the Gold Coast early in the eighteenth century) admit that the English had become very unpopular on the Gold Coast, owing to these aggressions on the natives; and William Smith and his companions endeavoured to pass as Frenchmen when they visited Eastern Liberia and the Ivory coast, because of the bad name the English had acquired. (j).

Most of the slaves were sent to the United States of America. Here they remained nearly three centuries in the most degrading circumstances. It was not until after the Revolutionary war in 1776 that the States of Vermont, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts gave their slaves freedom. This occurred between 1777 and 1780.

As horrible as the slave trade was, yet it had some good results. It may be regarded as an Act of Providence. The time had come when Africa, the pioneer of the civilisation of the human race, had to receive back the fruits of the seeds of civilisation she had long since sown amongst peoples of the white and yellow races in the east and west. They had to be re-enlightened. This was not possible if left to Africa herself, nor was it possible at that time for Europe to have awakened to the sense of gratitude and return in part what she had so freely received from Africa. She was then being consumed by her sins—by graft, greed, avarice, crimes and social debauchery, which threaten her even to this day.

It was for Africa to send her sons and daughters across the seas to bring her western education and culture. Providence made it possible by forcible separation of the tender ties which exist between the paternal and filial relationship. It was the school of experience they had to attend. Here on the cotton fields of the south they paid for their tuition in blood and tears. It was

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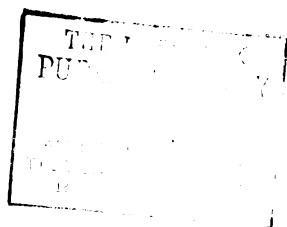
NOTE (j).—See Sir Harry Johnson's "Liberia," Chapter VIII.

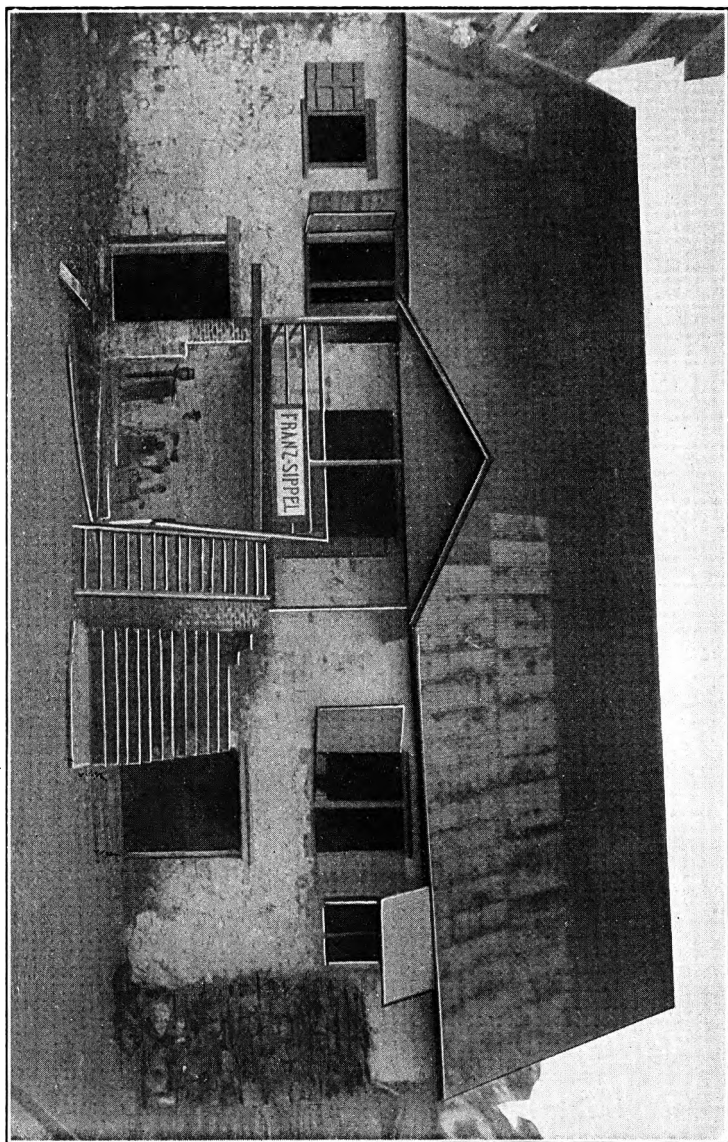
1777 before some of their masters thought these African pupils had advanced sufficiently well to think for themselves. But it was not until about forty years later that the idea of sending them back to their original home took root. So in December, 1816, some of their masters planned an organisation called the American Colonisation Society, to undertake the repatriation of these Africans to their fatherland, "where, free from the agitations of fear and molestation, they could approach in worship the God of their forefathers, the God of Africa; that here they should be at liberty to train up their children in the way that they should go—to inspire them with the love of an honourable fame; to kindle within them the flame of a lofty philanthropy, and to form strongly within them the principles of humanity, virtue, and religion." A religion in which may be seen the face, the colour and the attributes of the God of Africa. Accordingly, in 1820 the first set of immigrants came out to Africa. They were sent in care of the Reverend Samuel Bacon, John Bankson and Dr. S. Crozer (white men), in the good ship *Elizabeth*, and were eighty-eight in number. They first landed at Campelar, near Sherbro, and would have settled there but for the unhealthy condition of the climate.

In 1821 Ephraim Bacon, brother of Samuel Bacon, came out with his wife on the brig *Nautilus* to relieve the first set of colonists. They proceeded to Bassa, where a contract was entered into between the colonists and the local chiefs for a piece of land for settlement. At this time there came an outbreak of fever amongst them that caused Ephraim Bacon, Winn and Andrus to return to America. On January 7th, 1822, Dr. Eli Ayers and Captain R. F. Stockton arrived at the mouth of the Mesurado River with the remainder of the colonists from Sierra Leone on the U.S.S. *Alligator*.

They landed on a small island which was afterwards called *Providence*, because it was the third spot they had struggled to occupy. In April they crossed over on the mainland and founded a colony, which Goodloe Harper subsequently named Liberia, from the Latin word *liber*, which means *free*.







THE OLD COLONIAL STORE

## Period II.

# Founding of the Empire Republic

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### The New Settlements.

As you have learned, six thousand years B.C. (6000 B.C.) there existed in our country kingdoms and great empires built up by our forefathers. The form of government which they adopted was elective Monarchy. The Kings or Emperors were elected by the Senate, or Council of Elders, for life, and from a family recognised by the tribes as a ruling family. This form of government continued down to the return home of the Pioneer Fathers. In 1847, however, the form of government was changed to Republican. This was the system of government which had been taught to the Pioneer Fathers during their sojourn in the United States of America. While the government which they instituted was Republican in form, yet the old kingdoms remained intact, and the rule of the Kings over their subjects continued undisturbed. When the Pioneer Fathers returned home all the Kings of the land ceded to them tracts of land to build their colonies, and also the political right to represent all the kingdoms in foreign relations with other countries; and the right to declare war and to make peace, but never to sell any portion of their territory to any foreign people or government. These treaties then formed the kingdoms and the colonies of the Pioneer Fathers into a Federated State, the President of the Republic being recognised as the King of Kings, or the supreme ruler. The Republic of Liberia may therefore be said to be an Empire Republic having as its sovereign a President. The internal affairs of the kingdom are administered by the tribal customary laws and a few of the laws enacted by the National Legislature of the Republic.

The Pioneer Fathers came from the United States of America, the land of their sojourn, to their Fatherland, under the leadership of Eli Ayers, a white man, who represented the American Colonisation Society. They arrived on the 7th January, 1822, on the U.S.S. *Alligator*, commanded by Captain R. F. Stockton.

But previous to their arrival, on December 15th, 1821, a small tract of land had been purchased by the Society from the Kings of the country. This Deed of Cession was signed by the Kings



Peter, George, Yoda, and Long Peter, on Bushrod Island, 15th December, 1821. King Peter was probably King Zolu Duma of the Vai country, and the others of the De and Mamba tribes. They all recognised the immigrants to be the descendants of their own ancestors, and their kith and kin—their brothers who had over two centuries ago sojourned in the land of the white man to acquire western education and culture. So in addition to the small strip of land they had sold to the colonists, they also made over to them a strip of coast land one hundred and thirty miles broad, which might be reserved to them and their children for ever.

After the purchase, the colonists left Providence Island, and built their town on the mainland, which they afterwards called Monrovia, in honour of James Monroe, fifth President of the United States of America. The houses they built were chiefly of mud, log or boards, and without any porches or verandahs. About three miles distant from Monrovia were several towns and villages of their forefathers swarming with lovely, robust children. They practised polygamy, and their women were very prolific. Besides, as these people dealt no further in slaves than by selling their convicted criminals to the Europeans, the country was not depopulated like those in which the princes continually trafficked in their subjects. The purity of the air, the goodness of the water, and the abundance of every necessary of life all contributed to people this country.

“The natives are of large size, strong and well proportioned. Their mien is bold and martial, and their neighbours have often experienced their intrepidity, as well as those Europeans who attempted to injure them. They possess genius, they think justly, speak correctly, perfectly know their own interests, and recommend themselves with address and even with politeness. Their lands are carefully cultivated, they do everything with order and regularity, and they labour vigorously when they choose, which, unfortunately, is not so often as could be wished. Interest stimulates them strongly, and they are fond of gain without appearing so. Their friendship is constant; yet their friends must beware of making free with their wives, of whom they are very jealous. But they are not so jealous with respect to their daughters, who have an unbounded liberty, which so far from impeding their marriage, furthers it, in that a man is pleased at finding that a woman has given proofs of fertility, especially as the presents of her lovers make some amends for that which he is obliged to give her parents when he marries her. They tenderly love their children, and a sure and quick way to gain their friendship is to caress their little ones and to make them trifling presents. Their houses are very neat. Their kitchens are somewhat elevated above the ground, and of a square or oblong figure; three sides are walled up, and the fourth side is left open, being that from which the wind does not commonly blow. They place their posts in a row, and cement them together with a kind of fat and red clay,

which, without any mixture of lime, makes a strong and durable mortar. Their bed chambers are raised three feet above the ground, for experience has taught them that this elevation contributes to health, by securing them from the damps caused by the copious dews.

"The women work in the fields, and kindly assist one another. They bring up their children with great care, and have no other object but to please their husbands." (5).

Monrovia soon, too, presented a picture of thrift and energy. Small gardens were cultivated on patches of ground round the buildings for the production of food for family consumption.

Communication and trade soon became established between the colonists and their brethren in the surrounding towns, and they soon grew to love one another. This spirit of friendship continued to manifest itself among them until October, 1822, when the Cuban slave traders, Pedro Blanco and Canot, being afraid that the colonists would put a stop to the slave trade, incited the native Kings against the colonists and supplied them with arms and ammunitions. This has been the history of all the subsequent wars between the colonists and the natives. Apart from the exigencies of their slave traffic, the white race has always been jealous and afraid of the black acquiring knowledge and political independence; and so he leaves no stone unturned to make discord and confusion between the colonists and the aborigines of the country. Some Europeans have always been at the bottom of every war which has been fought between the colonists and the natives, their object being to make it appear that the natives have no regard for and do not acknowledge the authority of the Liberian Government. It becomes then the duty of every Liberian youth to keep wide awake to this situation. The European is land hungry. He has taken nearly the whole of Africa and yet he is not satisfied. He is still land hungry, and continues to make confusion in the world. The black man must not, however, be alarmed, for he will never be able to make Africa a permanent abode. In spite of all his achievements in the science of medicine, the mysteries in Africa will ever remain unknown to him. For Africa must remain for the Africans, is the decree of the God of Africa.

To return. In October, 1822, the Cuban slave traders succeeded in getting the De Kings to commit violence on the colonists. On August 8th of the same year Ashmun and his wife, with fifty-three other colonists, among whom was Elijah Johnson, arrived in the colony on the brig *Strong* from Baltimore. Ashmun came as Governor of the colony. Even at this time King George had changed his friendly attitude towards the colonists. This was due chiefly to the misrepresentations that were made to him and other De and Mamba Kings by the slave traders near the colony

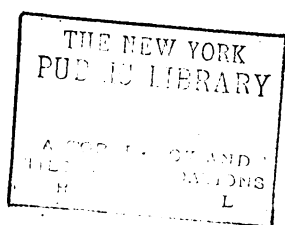
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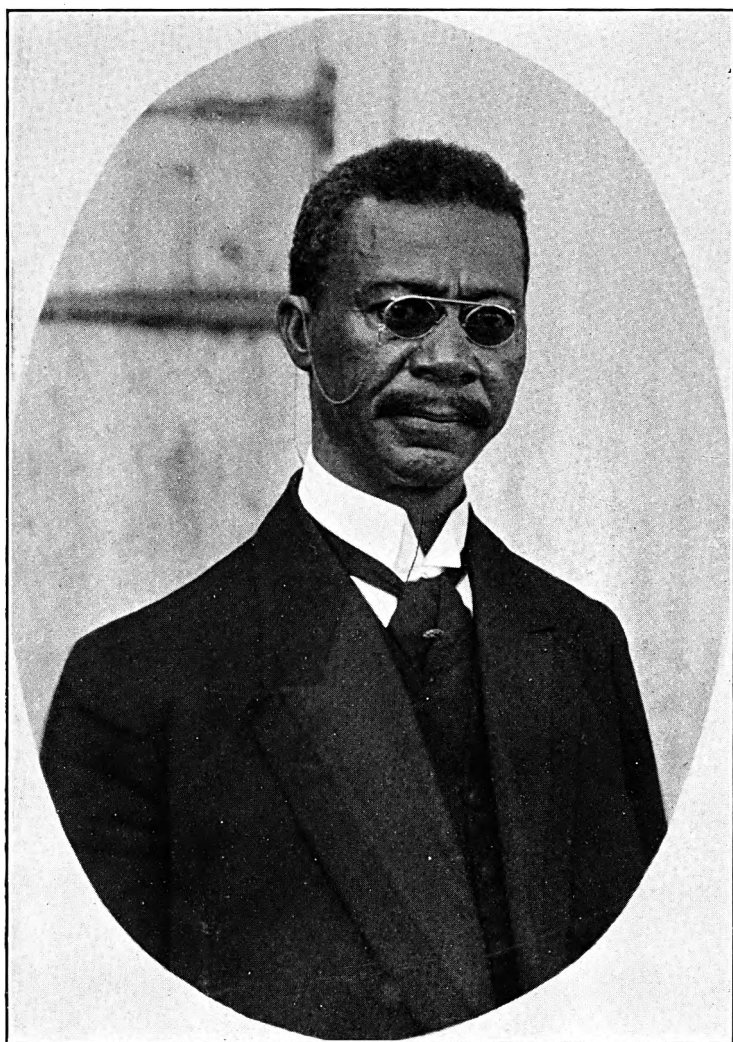
NOTE (5).—See Sir Harry Johnson's "Liberia," Vol. I., pp. 98-100.

and in the Gahlinas country. So on August 31st, Ashmun issued the following proclamation:—

1. That for the safe protection of lives and property the colony is hereby proclaimed to be under martial law.
2. That Elijah Johnson is Commissary of Stores.
3. That Robert Sampson is Commissary of Ordnance.
4. That Lott Carey is Health Officer and Government Inspector.
5. That Frederick James is Captain of the brass-mounted field-pieces, and Lieutenants R. Newport, M. S. Draper, William Meade and John Adams are hereby assigned to his command.
6. That A. James is Captain of the long 18, and has under his command James Benson, Eli Smith, William Hallings, Daniel Hawkins, John and Thomas Spencer.
7. That Joe Shaw is Captain of the Southern Picket Station, mounting two iron guns, to whose command are attached Samuel Campbell, Elijah Johnson, James Lawrence, Lewis Crook and George Washington.
8. That Daniel George is Captain of the Eastern Picket Station, and to his command are attached Alex. Edmondson, Joseph Gardiner, Josiah Webster and James Carey.
9. That Cornelius Brander is Captain of a carriage mounting two swivels to act in concert with the brass-piece, and move from station to station as occasion may require. Attached to this command are Timothy Tines and L. Butler.
10. That every man to have his musket and ammunitions with him, even when at the large guns.
11. Every officer is responsible for the conduct of the men placed under his command, who are to obey him at their peril.
12. That all the guns are to be got ready for action immediately, and every effective man is to be employed at the picket.
13. That, until otherwise ordered, five stations are to be occupied by guards every night.
14. That in case of alarm, every man shall repair instantly to his post and do his duty; no useless firing is permitted.

On November 11th, early in the morning, the struggle with the Des began. A confederacy of the Des, Mambas and Vais now made an attack on the town. The day was dusky, and the enemy marched against the little band stationed as a picket guard. Here they presented a front of ten yards in width at a distance of about sixty feet. They drove back the picket guard, delivered their fire, and rushed forward to seize the post. Women were wounded in their





**THE LATE VICE-PRESIDENT, J. J. DOSSEN**

houses and several children killed or kidnapped. Had the enemy at this juncture rushed forward they would have taken the colony. But they soon stopped to plunder the goods of the colonists. At this instance Lott Carey collected the broken forces and attacked three sides of their encampment. A savage struggle now ensued. Soon, however, he routed the enemy and brought the long nine to rake the remainder. It was a crushing blow. Says Ashmun: "About this time eight hundred men were here pressed shoulder to shoulder in so compact a force that a child might easily walk upon their heads from one end of the mass to the other. They presented in their rear a breadth of rank equal to twenty or thirty men, and all exposed to a gun of great power, raised on a platform at only thirty to sixty yards' distance. Every shot literally spent its force in a solid mass of human flesh." This was called the battle of Crown Hill.

The colonists now being elated over this victory proclaimed a "Day of Thanksgiving." But this defeat had only made the natives more resolute. On the first day of December, 1822, was fought the memorable battle of Fort Hill. Previous to this day, however, the Des had again begun to assemble large forces in the woods, and on December 1st over a thousand of them attacked the stockade. It took place simultaneously on two sides of the fortification. Both sides fought bravely. The action lasted nearly four hours, and was renewed three times with great violence. "The enemy's plan of assault," writes Ashmun, "was the very best they could devise. It was certainly sustained with renewed resolution that would not disgrace the best disciplined troops." A desperate attack was finally made on the eastern quarter of the settlement, and in less than ninety minutes nearly overwhelmed this small band of resolute fighters. At this juncture Matilda Newport ignited the old cannon with a coal of fire from her pipe, and soon there was a great boom. The host fled in wild panic among the forest trees near the Cape, leaving behind them over six hundred souls dead or wounded. The colonists also sustained small losses in killed and wounded. Timothy Tines, under the command of Captain Brander, was killed, while Lewis Crook, under Captain Shaw, and Gardiner, under Captain George, were very badly wounded. Ashmun also received three bullets through his clothes.

Now when the battle was all over and the victory won, the *Prince Regent*, a British vessel on its way to Cape Coast Castle, arrived in port with Major Laing. This British officer offered Elijah Johnson his assistance provided he would cede him a patch of ground upon which to erect his British flag. But the noble patriot resolutely refused his offer, trusting to the heroic arms of the thirty-seven warriors and the propitious direction of Providence. "No," says Johnson, "we want no flag-staff put up here, that it will cost us more to get down than to whip the natives."

A few days later, landed from aboard the same ship Midshipman Gordon with eleven seamen to assist the colonists. They lived

in the colony about one month, and he and eight of his men died of virulent fever. They were mourned by the colonists, and their "bones now lay beside those of the Pioneer Fathers." Though too late to share in the glory of the action, yet they deserve the credit due to all those who lay down their lives for the love of humanity.

Peace having been restored, the colonists now busied themselves with extending the borders of their little territory. On the 18th of December, 1832, thirty-three volunteers set out from Monrovia to found a new colony. The town they built was afterwards called *Edina*. In 1835 another settlement was founded by the Pennsylvanian Society, called *Bassa Cove*.

In 1835 lands were purchased from the Kings all along the coast, and as far down as Sinoe. In 1838 the town of Greenville, so named in honour of James Green, was built by the colonists sent out by the Mississippi Colonisation Society. In 1837 another town was built near the mouth of the Farmington River and called Marshall, in honour of James Marshall, Chief Justice, U.S.A. In 1838 another settlement was established on the St. John's River by one Lewis Shedidan, a distinguished Negro capitalist. This settlement was called Bexley. In 1837 Thomas Buchanan built a town about three miles from *Bassa Cove*, which was subsequently named *Buchanan*, after him.

These constituted the principal Liberian settlements at this time. Cape Palmas was founded by the State of Maryland, U.S.A., through the medium of a Colonisation Society organised by the said State in 1827. The first set of colonists, about thirty-one in all, was sent with Dr. James Hall in 1831. But owing to some disagreement with Mechlin, the Governor of Monrovia, Dr. Hall was compelled to proceed beyond the territorial limits of Liberia. After his return from the United States in 1833, he directed his expedition to Cape Palmas. Here he bought lands from King Jude and other Grebo chiefs, and founded the settlement called Harper, after Goodloe Harper, U.S.A.

Several important treaties were also concluded between the colonists and the Kings. On October 27th, 1825, Ashmun concluded a treaty with King Freeman for a piece of land south of the Bassa Point near New Cess, the headquarters of Theodore Canot, the Cuban slave trader. He also bought land round about the Promontory of Grand Cape Mount. This treaty was signed by the Kings of this section on April 12th, 1826, in which it was stipulated by the Kings that the said territory should never be sold by the colonists to any foreign subjects or governments. This was, therefore, the original of Section 13, Article V. of the Constitution, which reads thus: "The great object of forming these colonies being to provide a home for the dispersed and oppressed children of Africa and to regenerate and enlighten this benighted Continent, none but Negroes or persons of Negro descent shall be admitted to citizenship to this Republic."

On October 11th, 1826, treaties were made with and lands purchased from the Mamba Kings, Will, Tom, and Peter Harris, all that territory about the Junk River and that which lies between the Dukwia and Farmington Rivers. On October 17th in the same year, King Joe Harris, of Grand Bassa, together with the other chiefs, ceded to the colonists a strip of land at the mouth of the St. John River as far south as the Bassa Point. By these treaties and purchases the colonists had now acquired some political rights to all that portion of the Grain coast between Cape Mount on the north and Grand Bassa Point on the south, besides territory some forty miles interiorward. On March 4th, 1828, Ashmun also entered into treaty arrangements with King Sao Bosuan, which gave the colonists large territorial rights over the interior north of Grand Cape Mount.



## CHAPTER IX.

### The New Constitution.

The colony had already enjoyed a respite from wars with the Des for nearly two years. Soon, however, there arose serious misunderstanding between the colonists and the Governor. Matters grew so heated that the Governor was compelled to leave the colony for a short while for the islands. This state of affairs grew out of perhaps discontent, or poverty among the older settlers. The series of wars they had had to wage from the very beginning of the settlement had prevented them from tilling the land. They were in consequence compelled in a large measure to depend upon the stores sent out by the Society.

On the 19th of March, 1824, the Governor reduced the rations of the older colonists, insisting that they should go to the soil for support and not to depend wholly on the food supplies coming from the Society. There also arose amongst them quarrels and disputes about land boundaries and other agrarian rights. This caused violent opposition on the part of the colonists against the Governor, resulting in drastic communications being sent by both parties to the Managers of the Board in the United States. The Society was therefore compelled to send out Ralph Gurley as Special Commissioner to inquire into the affairs of the colony and to draw up a provisional Constitution, known as the *Gurley Constitution*.

Gurley came out on the U.S.S. *Porpoise*. He met Governor Ashmun at the Cape Verde Islands, and persuaded him to return to the colony. At this time there were no written laws to govern the actions of both colonists and agent. In July, 1824, Gurley, after his arrival, immediately set to work to inquire into the affairs of the colony and to redress the grievances of the colonists. He next drew up a Constitution with several important provisions.

According to the provisions of this Constitution, the sovereign powers of the State were vested in a single magistrate, known as Agent or Governor, who also presided over all meetings, judicial or legislative; and he was subject only to the Constitution, and the decisions of the Board of the Colonisation Society. Public affairs were administered by eleven other officers elected annually by the colonists themselves.

The most important of these were the Vice-Agent, two Councilors, a High Sheriff, a Secretary of Public Affairs, a Registrar, and a Town Treasurer, whose duty it was to keep and to pay out public moneys. There were also Customs Inspectors, about two in number, who, in addition to their duty as inspectors of vessels and revenue, performed also the duty of Collectors of Customs and Wharfingers. As trade and the territorial limits of the State

increased, their numbers also increased, and they assumed the more definite title of Collector of Customs and Wharfingers. The Appraisers were officers who performed the duty of Inspectors of premises and buildings, and in many cases they also performed the duty of auctioneers. The Appraisers, like the Governor, were appointed by the Society. There were, in addition to these officers, other minor ones known as Clerks, Criers of Courts, Constables and Commissaries of Ordnance. The minor officers were appointed by the Governor and were continued in office at his pleasure. Six others were elected from each of the smaller settlements with a population of not less than sixty families, reckoning six persons to one family. Two acted as Commissioners of Agriculture, two as Health Officers, and two as Censors. This may be considered the first real great charter ever issued by the United States to the Africans who had sojourned in that country. It was also at this time that the name "Liberia" was given to the colony, and the town christened with the name "Monrovia."

## CHAPTER X.

## The War with the Slave Traders.

About seventy (70) miles south from Monrovia there were three slave factories owned by an Italian named Theodore Canot and Don Pedro Blanco, a native of Malaga. These were located at Little Bassa, Trade Town, and New Cess, in the County of Grand Bassa. From here large quantities of slaves were shipped by these slave traders on board Portuguese, Spanish, and even American vessels to Cuba and other parts in North or South America. Many times Canot had to ship hundreds of slaves in small kru canoes through the bad surf on to these slave ships. Being in a great hurry that he might not be caught up in his wrong doings, sometimes these little canoes would turn over in the midst of the heavy breakers, and many of the slaves would be devoured by sharks. On one occasion he lost nearly one hundred slaves while trying to send them off in a hurry through the heavy breakers. In order to protect his trade, Pedro Blanco ordered two large vessels of war to guard these stations. These vessels were equipped, mounting between them eleven carriage guns, with sixty disciplined men on board. The first vessel, called the *Perle*, arrived in January, 1826, and the *Teresa* in April of the same year.

The colonists detested the slave trade and made great efforts to put an end to this horrible crime. So later in the year (1826) these slavers were ordered to abandon their slave factories, but they paid no attention to the repeated demands of the colonists. Ashmun then decided to take up arms against them. Preparation was made by the colonists for this purpose, and in the following month they set sail from Monrovia to attack Trade Town. Besides the two war vessels, there were also on the beach about three hundred and fifty natives under arms, and officered by the slave traders.

The little army of the colonists numbered in all about one hundred men, including baggage carriers. The preparations for war lasted only nine days. Fortunately for the colonists, during these preparations, three brigs of war sent out by the Government of the United States to assist Dr. Peaco, United States' Agent for resettling recaptured Africans, arrived in the colony.

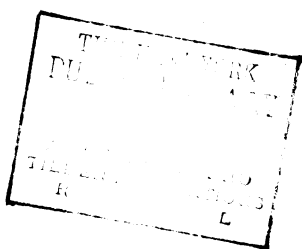
These now joined the colonial force and sailed off for Trade Town. The colonial force almost met with a total shipwreck and failure. The first boat, in which was the American infantry, met with sharp firing from Spanish soldiers on shore, while the flag-boat containing Ashmun and twenty-four soldiers capsized, lost all the arms and ammunition and injured several of the men, including Ashmun. The brigs were then ordered to open fire, but owing to their great distance none of the shots could go beyond

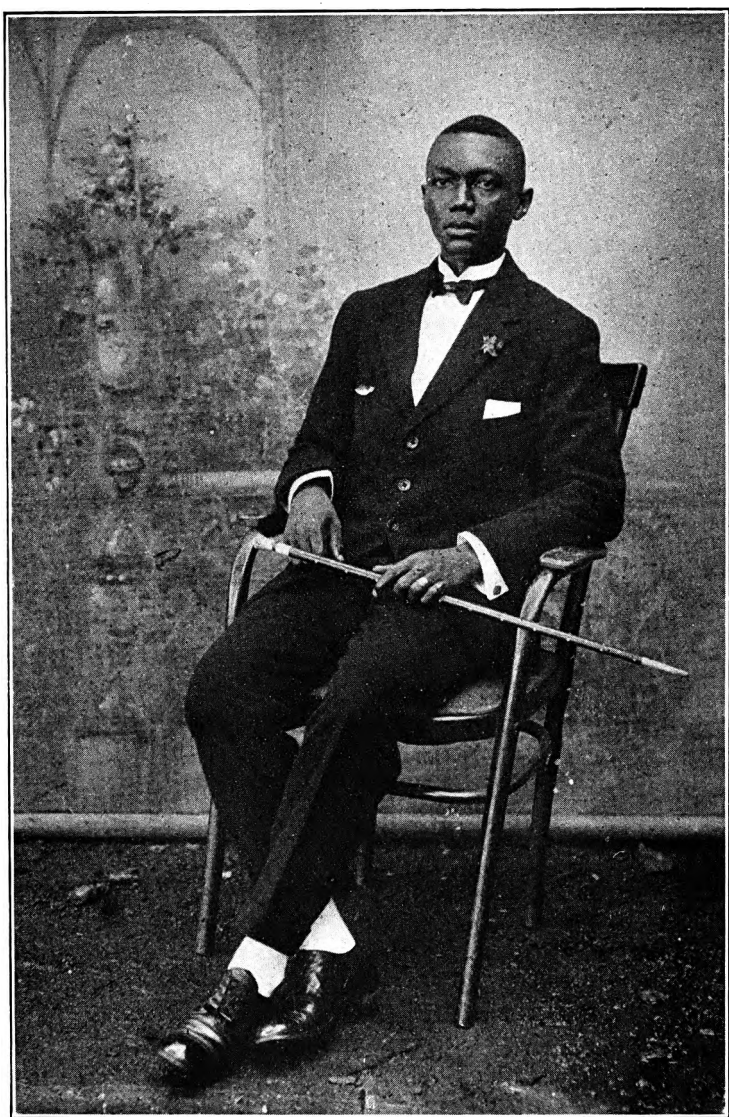
the shore. Meanwhile Captain Barbour, a Liberian officer, in order to prevent sharing the fate of the preceding boats, ran his north-west of the bar and landed his men uninjured. He was soon brought face to face with the fire from the enemy's guns. For three whole hours the firing continued on both sides. The colonial soldiers defeated the French and Spanish forces and then set fire to the town. Soon there was a great explosion; over two hundred casks of powder hidden away in the factories caught fire and exploded with a great boom. Had this expedition proved fatal, the prestige of the colonists would have been destroyed and their power to suppress the slave trade gone for ever. Their victory, therefore, at Trade Town did more in suppressing the slave trade on the coast than any single event except the enactments of the English and American Legislatures.

In August, 1838, the colonists again went to war with their enemies. This time it was with the Krus. The cause of this war was on account of the murder of Governor Finley, of Sinoe, by the Krus at Bassa Cove, for his money. Finley had been ill and came to Monrovia in search of health. On his way back to Sinoe he met Canot, the old slave trader, who offered to take him on a cruise. The Governor accepted, but afterwards insisted on landing, on account of the actions of this slave trader. Canot, in wishing to take revenge for the destruction of his slave factories in Trade Town by the colonists in the early part of 1828, secretly induced the Kru fishermen, of Bassa Cove, to attack Finley. So as soon as he landed he was murdered, his money carried off, and his body mutilated on the beach. Aroused by such an atrocious deed, the colonists of Bassa Cove decided in a mass meeting to avenge the death of the Governor.

After a hasty preparation, the militia was placed under Wesley Johnson to march against the enemy. In the first engagement Johnson was routed by the Krus and shamefully driven back. The colonists then decided to send to Monrovia for help. About six hundred men volunteered to go and assist their southern brethren, but for some reason or other they did not arrive until six months later. During this state of affairs the Krus, buoyed up by their former success, had collected about two thousand additional forces to attack the colonists. They had gathered themselves at the mouth of the bar for the purpose. Mrs. Neuby, of Edina, seeing this host of Krus and Bassa warriors thus stationed, turned the mouth of the old cannon towards them and fired it off. The enemy, frightened from this sudden attack, fled in great confusion, leaving several of their comrades dead or wounded. But this did not weaken the Krus; additional forces were soon collected to make a final attack on the town. About this time nearly six hundred men from Monrovia arrived. The Militia under Johnson and these volunteers were now placed under the command of Major Weaver. The battle was again renewed. Forts Fishpoint and Trade Town were soon captured by the colonists and levelled to the ground.

King Boya surrendered, and his towns one after another soon capitulated. This victory decided the war, and the whole extent of territory from the Cove to the Cesstors Rivers now became the territory of the colonists. In 1839 a treaty was made in which the Krus agreed to leave Fishpoint and pay an indemnity for the murder of Governor Finley.





**A CONGO LAD ATTENDING COLLEGE**

## CHAPTER XI.

### The Commonwealth.

In 1839 a new Constitution, written by James Greenleaf, of the United States, was adopted. Under this new Constitution the several colonies—Monrovia, Marshall, Buchanan, and Sinoe—were united under a single Government. According to the provision of this Constitution the executive powers were vested in the Governor, who was assisted by a Vice-Governor. The population of the colonies had now increased by several arrivals of immigrants from the United States and accessions of recaptured Africans amounting to about two thousand two hundred and eighty-one (2,281) persons.

Thomas Buchanan, of Philadelphia, a cousin of President James Buchanan, U.S.A., was now appointed the first Governor of the Commonwealth, and Joseph Jenkins Roberts, of Monrovia, as Vice-Governor. Buchanan's administration was marked with a series of troubles from the natives and the British traders. From 1838 to 1840 the whole country was convulsed by constant warfare between the Gola and the De tribes, in which the Gola people were eventually victorious; the Des ever since have taken an inferior position and become a dwindling tribe. This warfare was not at first especially directed against the colonists, though it did considerable damage to their little colonies, and under Williams's timid rule they were powerless to impose peace by force of arms. But when Buchanan took up the reins of Government, he had resolved to put an end to this disorder, the more so as the King of Bopolo had constituted himself the champion of the Gola people, and in his defeat of the Des had glanced aside to attack the colonists who were settlers along the shores of the St. Paul River. These settlers had no doubt assisted the Des to defend themselves. The Bopolo King, Gatumba, was the successor of King Sao Bosuan, who, as already related, had built up a heterogeneous confederacy of peoples in the hilly country round Bopolo. Bosuan had been a steady friend of the Liberian Government.

Buchanan had been suffering from a violent attack of fever towards the close of 1839, when he heard of Gatumba's advance down the St. Paul River. He despatched a message to this chief-tain, warning him that he would be held answerable for any attack on Liberian settlements. Gatumba sent him an insulting reply. The destruction of Millsburg decided Buchanan (though still very ill) that the time for energetic action had arrived. He therefore organised a force of three hundred Liberian Militia, with several field guns, and appointed a young Octoroon trader, Joseph Jenkins Roberts, to command the expedition. Gatumba had a fero-

C



cious ally named Gotolo, supposed to be a professing cannibal. With seven hundred men Gotolo attacked a little mission at Heddington; but although Heddington was only inhabited by a handful of settlers, they were well armed, and offered such a determined resistance that Gotolo was killed and his men desisted from further attack. Buchanan had accompanied the little army under General Roberts's command. He now resolved to carry the war into the enemy's country, and so the three hundred Liberians marched through dense forest on Gatumba's stronghold, which is said to have been a walled town about twenty miles from Millsburg. They were compelled to leave their cannons behind owing to the great difficulty of transporting heavy loads through the forests and occasional swamps. But they made up for the lack of artillery by well-directed volleys, which so impressed Gatumba's soldiers that after the first fierce conflict they abandoned their stronghold and chief. Roberts occupied Gatumba's town for twenty-four hours and then burnt it to the ground.

Gatumba became a wanderer, and this determined action acquired for the Government considerable prestige in the eyes of the natives. A fresh treaty of peace and friendship was now made with the chiefs of Bopolo; but although Gatumba had lost all power, the country on both banks of the St. Paul River remained in an unsettled state for some time, and its agricultural development, which had been proceeding so satisfactorily during the "thirties," received a check from which it took a long time to recover.

Buchanan took advantage of the prestige acquired by his forces in the war against Gatumba to conclude treaties of friendship with several native Kings, and brought all his influence to bear in suppressing internecine warfare amongst the tribes, in putting down barbarous customs such as the poison ordeal, and above all in attacking the slave trade. Unfortunately the slave trade was actually encouraged (at that period) and maintained by American ships under the "Stars and Stripes." American slaving ships bore their cargoes of wretched men and women unmolested, because at that period the British Government had not acquired the right to search American vessels; while the United States Government would not (until about 1842) take any measure of its own to stop this traffic. But for British cruisers, Buchanan must have looked on impotently whilst the vicinities of the Bassa settlements and Grand Cape Mount were turned into slave exporting stations.

But the co-operation of British ships was not without its danger for the independence of Liberia. They entirely disregarded the revenue laws of the Commonwealth. The palm oil trade was already ousting the commerce in slaves as an inducement for European enterprise on the West Coast of Africa, and Great Britain at this time was the principal purchaser of palm oil, a commodity to which Liverpool and British shipping owe not a little of its development during the last sixty years. Liberia was found to be well furnished by nature with the palm oil, and

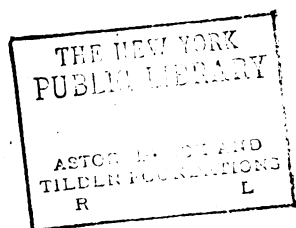
British traders from Sierra Leone began to settle on the Liberian coast, very anxious to carry their flag with them, and scornful of a Government conducted by civilised Negroes (even to this day).

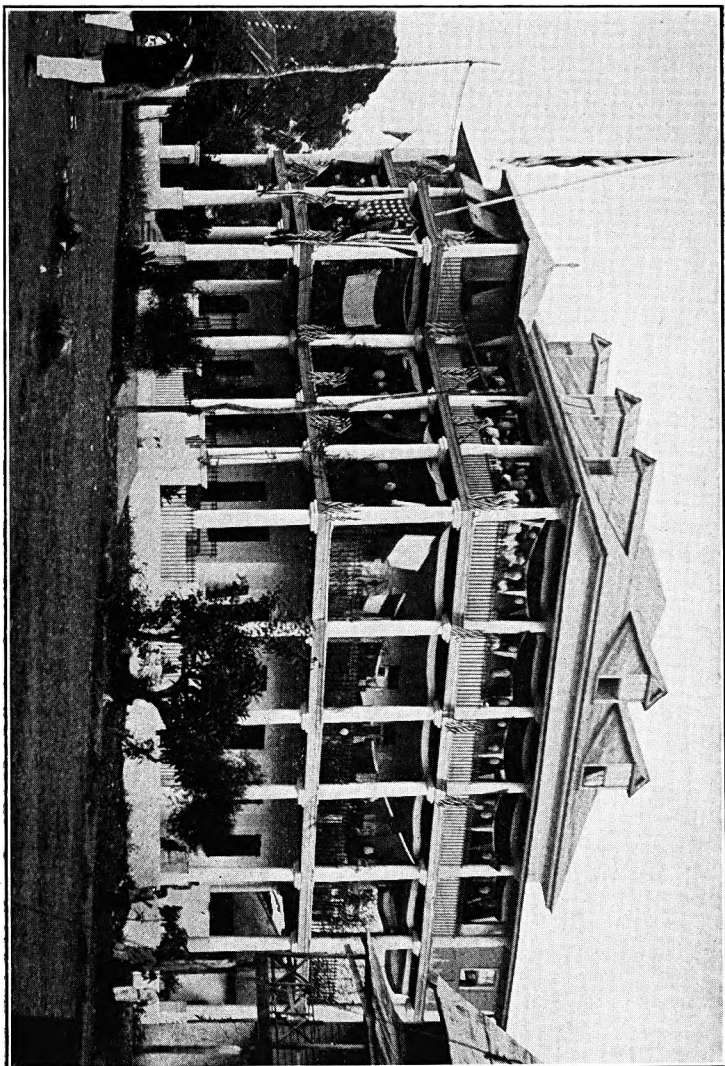
In 1840 Buchanan decided to send an agent to England to obtain assurances that English Colonisation Societies would not encroach on the limits of Liberia. The Liberians viewed with suspicion the motives of the British Anti-slave Society, even under the direction of Fowell Buxton. It was thought that under the guise of philanthropy, Great Britain would extend her rule eastward from Sierra Leone until she linked it with the Gold Coast Colony. Americans interested in the future of Liberia at this time urged the United States to purchase the Dutch and Danish settlements on the Gold Coast, in the hope that this action might intensify the interest of the United States in Liberia, which Buchanan was desirous of turning into a regular American colony for American Negroes. But Buchanan's expectations were never fulfilled. He died at Government House, Bassa Cove, on September 3rd, 1841.

The Vice-Governor, J. J. Roberts, succeeded Buchanan as Governor. Roberts's administration lasted nearly six years, during which time he was confronted with a series of troubles from the French and British traders. In 1842, the French King, Louis Philippe, becoming jealous of the Liberian Colonies, did all he could to rob them of the territories in Grand Bassa and Cape Mount. At Garaway it is said that the French flag was actually displayed, but Roberts having strongly protested against this action as encroachment on Liberian territories, the French evacuated, and the question was not again discussed until 1892, during President Cheeseman's administration. This bold action on the part of the French led Roberts to purchase all the important sites along the borders of the Commonwealth, commencing from Cape Mount to the Grand Cessors River. Meanwhile the commercial greed of the British traders had increased to an enormous rate. They absolutely disregarded the customs laws of Liberia. It was also believed that the Sierra Leone Government was at the bottom, if not the instigator, of all the evils perpetrated at that time by the British traders. The result was the seizure of the *Little Ben*, owned by a British trader, by the Liberians at Grand Bassa for violating the revenue laws. The Sierra Leone Government soon retaliated for this action by the capture in the harbour of Grand Bassa of the *John Seys*, laden with produce, and owned by Allen Benson.

This led the Colonisation Society to appeal to the United States Government for intervention. The United States Government then took the question up with Great Britain for some explanations. The British Government, on the other hand, replied that "Great Britain could not recognise the sovereign powers of Liberia, which she regarded as a mere commercial experiment of a philanthropic society." The United States having taken up the

question half-heartedly, the matter was dropped a few months later, and Liberia had to stem the current single-handedly. Owing to this lack of interest on the part of the United States Government on behalf of Liberia, the Society was led to abandon her colonies in 1846. In January that year the Society informed the settlers "That the time had come when it was expedient for the people of the Commonwealth of Liberia to take into their hands the whole work of self-government, including the management of all their foreign relations." And from that time onward Liberia has assumed all the duties and responsibilities of self-government. Accordingly a Convention met on June 25th, 1847, and after a deliberation of thirty days on July 26th, a New Constitution was adopted, declaring the Commonwealth of Liberia a Free, Sovereign and Independent State.





THE EXECUTIVE MANSION

## CHAPTER XII.

### Republican Administrations.

In October that year J. J. Roberts was elected President of Liberia, with Nathaniel Brander as Vice-President, and inaugurated on the first Monday in January, 1848. Roberts was a Republican, and all the members of his Government Republican men. The Constitution, which was adopted in July, 1847, was written by Greenleaf, of the United States of America, and sent out by the Colonisation Society to the colonists. This Constitution provided that the term of office for President shall be only two years. Owing to such short period, notwithstanding the poverty of the people, the country was compelled to undergo frequent consecutive political upheavals every other year. This was the result of the short-sighted statesmanship of the leaders of the Republican Party. When the Convention met in June, 1847, to adopt the new Constitution, the term of office for the President should have been amended from two to ten years, on account of straitened economic conditions. But this point was entirely overlooked, and instead the Republicans, who controlled the Constitutional Convention, only made an unimportant amendment, in equalising the number of Representation of Sinoe County in the House of Representatives to that of Grand Bassa. There were also other glaring defects in the Constitution, but which were strangely unobserved by the Republicans. The territories which were purchased by the colonists from the natives up to the adoption of the Constitution in 1847, although having a coastal front of nearly six hundred miles, yet they did not extend beyond forty (40) miles interiorward. It was plain the Constitution could not operate beyond that limit, and the only rights that could be claimed and exercised by the colonists over the rest of the country were those clearly stipulated in the treaties of Ashmun and King Bosuan, and Buchanan and other Kings of the hinterland.

It is evident then that the new Constitution ought to have been so amended as to define the relation of these kingdoms to the colonies with respect to the affairs of the State. A greater statesmanship might have been evinced by the Republican leaders if they had seized this opportunity and adopted a federal constitution over the kingdoms and colonies, while allowing the colonies to continue to be governed by a Governor under a separate local constitution. Local constitutions for the government of the Kingdoms might have been also evolved from local tribal customs and long usages, and modified to the intelligent, commonsense viewpoint of making ultimately a homogeneous people of our varied populations.

The effort could not have met with serious difficulty. For Roberts, who had governed the people for the past six years as Governor, was practically still in power, and had great influence, and if he, and Benedict, the President of the Convention, had combined forces, the Republicans would have been able to carry these amendments through the Convention quite easily. All these important questions were overlooked, and the Constitution was adopted with scarcely any opposition or amendment. The result was that the country experienced in after years many national difficulties, and all of the Republican Administrations were thus handicapped in administering the affairs of Government. And in spite of the fact that the Republicans held office for thirty-five consecutive years (1847-1883), with the exception of a brief intervention when the Whigs came into power through Roye's Government in 1870-71, no public works were undertaken, no roads in the hinterland, and communication between the colonists and the hinterland populations became difficult. Every other year the country had to face strenuous political upheavals and financial drawbacks. The President of the Republic was thus compelled to be in politics the whole of his two years' term of office and every day in the year. Under these conditions the only thing a President could and did do was to carefully hold the country intact to hand over to his successor.

One of the first things which Roberts did was to visit Europe and England in order to secure the recognition of the New State by these countries. England was the first to recognise the Republic, in 1848, and France the second, in 1852. He was received by Queen Victoria on her royal yacht in April, 1848, and she afterwards presented the Republic, through him, with a warship called the *Lark*. Roberts came back to Monrovia on the British war vessel *Amazon*. A few years later, when the *Lark* became unfit for service, the British Government again presented the Republic with another war vessel, called *Quail*. The French Government also at this time assumed a friendly attitude towards the Republic.

In 1850 the Sherbro and Gahlinas territories were purchased and annexed to the Republic. This tract of land, extending from the Mano River to the Sherbro, cost the country about twenty thousand pounds (£20,000) sterling, about two thousand pounds of which were obtained through British philanthropy. The rest of the amount came from the Liberian treasury. These purchases were made chiefly to abolish the slave trade in those regions, and to extend the borders of the Republic.

In 1851 there arose troubles between the Krus and the Bassa colonists. The Krus, at this time as in former times, were influenced by the foreign traders by misrepresentations to do violence to the towns of the colonists at Bassa Cove. For this purpose the Krus and the Bassa formed a confederacy. Their leader was named Tahplagn. A large number of these confederates soon assembled under the leadership of Tahplagn and commenced attacks on the garrison at Fishtown, the present Lower Buchanan.

A fierce struggle ensued between the colonists and the enemy round the garrison, resulting in the colonists being defeated, the garrison decimated, and about twenty-nine (29) colonists killed or wounded. Tahplagn next directed his forces on the town of Buchanan. Here a decisive battle was fought within the walls of the town. It is said that men, women and even children took part in this hand-to-hand battle. Tahplagn was now killed, and his overwhelming forces of two thousand swordsmen and about two hundred spearmen fled in great confusion, leaving about a hundred or more dead or wounded. This occurred on November 15th, 1851.

Roberts's Government lasted till the end of 1855, Roberts having been re-elected President of Liberia for three subsequent terms. In 1855 Roberts offered himself for a fifth term. Roberts's administrations were successful, and the country was greatly strengthened under his direction. But Roberts was a mulatto, and so light that he could have easily passed for a white man. A feeling at this time had commenced to grow amongst the settlers as to whether the Government was not white instead of black. And although Roberts was a Republican, yet this feeling was also shared among the Republican ranks. The people wanted a black Government, and not white. They had already suffered from white rule, and had come back to the Fatherland to seek refuge from grinding oppressions, and also to demonstrate to the world the ability of the Negro to conduct a civilised Christian Government without the dictation of the white race.

About this time there was an American ship in the port of Monrovia. One Mr. Thomas, who came ashore with Captain White, of the ship, reported in his "*West Coast of Africa*" a conversation which is said to have taken place between the Captain and one of the settlers, whom he had known in the State of Virginia as "Buck." The Captain asked, "Which of the candidates for the Presidency are you going to vote for?" "Oh, Benson, sir." "Has not Roberts made you a good President?" "Oh, yes." "He is a very smart man, and much respected abroad," continued the Captain. "I think you had better vote for him." "That's all true," said Colonel Brown, "but the fact's just this, Massa White, the folks say as how we darkies ain't fitten to take care o' ourselfs—ain't capable. Roberts is a very fine gentleman, but he is more white than black. Benson's *coloured people all over*. There's no use talking Government, and making laws, and that kind o' things, if they ain't going to keep 'um up. I vote for Benson, sir, 'cause I wants to know if we's going to stay nigger or turn monkey." (j) So that in the campaign of 1855 Benson, of Buchanan, who represented a pure Negro type, was elected President of Liberia, and with him D. B. Warner, of Monrovia, for Vice-President.

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NOTE (j).—See Starr's "*Liberia*," p. 90.



From 1858 to 1860 the population of the Republic had increased to about fifteen thousand (15,000). It was during this period that a large number of immigrants, composed mostly of Congoes, arrived at Monrovia. In 1858 about two hundred recaptured from the slave ship *Echo* came to Liberia. In the following year the *Castilian*, the *South Shore* and the *Star of the Union* brought in all about 1,639 Congoes. In 1860 the arrivals from the United States to this country by the *Mary Caroline Stevens* numbered about 10,545 persons. In the *African Repository*, vol. 36, No. 7, it is reported that "the charter of these three ships which brought the Congoes to Liberia cost the United States Government \$36,500.00. The expenses of their outfit of provisions and water for the passage, and for the Africans after their arrival in Liberia, have already amounted to \$60,778.98, and for each person the United States Government appropriated by Congressional enactment the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars for his annual support." According to special arrangements effected between the United States Government and the Colonisation Society, these Africans were to receive education and such training as would fit them for usefulness in the Republic. But these Africans were divided among the older settlers, and all the money squandered by the Republican leaders and their wards neglected.

On the 28th February, 1857, the Independent State of Maryland, in Liberia, was annexed to the Republic. Before this time the State of Maryland had had a fairly successful existence, and had a coastline of about two hundred and fifty miles, extending from Sinoe to the St. Pedro River in the east. The first Governor of Maryland was J. B. Russworm. He held office until his death in 1851, and was succeeded by S. M. McGill. McGill was succeeded by William A. Prout (1854). After Prout came J. B. Drayton. The policy of Drayton was very unsatisfactory to the Greboes. So in 1856 serious difficulties arose between them and the Government of Maryland. The Marylanders were unable to cope with the situation, all the Grebo tribes having combined against that State. Immediate appeal was therefore sent to President Benson, of Liberia, for help. A force of 250 men was called up by President Benson and immediately despatched to the scene, under the command of General Roberts, the ex-President. After the arrival of such considerable force in Cape Palmas, the Greboes became overawed and sued for peace. A treaty of friendship was signed through the efforts of Roberts and J. T. Gibson, of Cape Palmas, between the natives and that State on February 25th, 1857. It was, however, felt that the only way to settle difficulties between the natives and that State was to annex it to Liberia; so on February 28th, 1857, such an arrangement was effected by which Maryland would become part of Liberia. In April of that same year the President convened an extra session of the Legislature, in which the State of Maryland was formally admitted as one of the Counties of the Republic, substituting the title of Governor for that of Superintendent, the first Superintendent being Joseph T. Gibson.

In 1861 there arose another trouble in Maryland—the trouble which at first was only amongst the tribes, but owing to continued hostilities it was then necessary for the Government in Monrovia to come in and put a stop to it. So after Benson's fourth election, General Pinkett was sent with an expedition to those disaffected sections to quell the uprising. General Pinkett fell upon the enemy, and within a few hours the enemy sued for peace. This was called the Padi, or Po River war. Peace was declared, and the country rested from hostilities for fourteen years.

In the same year (1861) an incident occurred in the harbour of Monrovia. The R.L.S. *Quail*, cruising along the coast off Cape Mount, found a Spanish vessel, loaded with slaves from the Vai Country, ready to put to sea with her human cargo. On spying the *Quail*, however, the captain of the vessel abandoned his ship and made for the shore. Commander Monger, of the *Quail*, also got into his boat and pursued the trader. But the sea was on this day very heavy, and whilst going over the bar, the boat capsized and the commander was drowned. The Spanish vessel was, however, captured and turned over to the British Government. Monger was succeeded by Samuel Benedict. A month thereafter the Spaniards became exasperated at this action and sent out a war vessel to chastise Liberia. On arriving in the port of Monrovia, where the *Quail* was at anchor, she sailed around and poured three volleys into the aft part of the *Quail*. Benedict repulsed the attack, and sending well-directed volleys, tore the stern of the Spanish warship and chased it round the Cape. To this day the Republic has not had any more trouble with Spain.

In the latter fifties and the early sixties agriculture made considerable progress in the Republic. During this period there were several big farmers carrying on large coffee and sugar plantations on the St. Paul River. Large quantities of yams, cocoa and even cotton were cultivated on the banks of that river. In those days there was plenty of foodstuff in the country and the farmers became wealthy. And even down to the eighties and early nineties none of the big planters could be induced to accept office in Monrovia. Speaking of the St. Paul River in those early days of the Republic, in contrast to the appearance of the present day, these settlements would seem to have been standing during a long-forgotten era of some two or three centuries ago. Nearly all of the large flourishing plantations have already disappeared, and even the homes of those great planters have gone into ruin.

One of the main reasons which may have accounted for the instability of agricultural and other pursuits in Liberia is the fact of their being started on cheap labour, and in some instances even on ill-directed free labour. In 1864 a sugar cane grower on the St. Paul River wrote the following letter to his friend in America:—

“My entire farming operations are carried on with them (Congoes and some few Golas). My steam mill has for its engineer a Vai boy. My sugar-maker, Cooper, and fireman are Con-

goes, and their entire acquaintance with the material parts have been gained by observation. At wood chopping they cannot be excelled. Seven boys or young men have in three weeks' time cut one hundred and seventy-five cords of wood, and when I tell you how they managed thus to do, it will be another fact to prove that the hope of reward sweetens labour. These boys are my apprentices, and they cut each as his week's work five cords of wood and put it up; for all they cut and put up over that quantity, I pay them fifty cents per cord. So you see in three weeks' time they make for themselves twenty-five dollars. My cooper is far in advance of many American-Liberians, who style themselves such; likewise my sugar-maker."

In order to stimulate agricultural interest in the country, national fairs were held in each year during the latter days of Benson's Government, and even later, in the nineties. In 1858 and 1859 two national fairs were held in Monrovia. There were many useful articles and hardware products exhibited at this time. People came from all parts of the country with the products of their farms and specimens of handiwork of either their trade or professions for exhibit. This acted as a great stimulus to the farmers and even to literature. For during these exhibits a very excellent work on political economy, written by James S. Payne, who became President of Liberia in later years, was also exhibited. There were other National fairs held in later years. The grandest of these was held in 1890, in the County of Grand Bassa. It is said that several useful articles never before exhibited were presented at this time. Three yams were there exhibited, one weighing over 300 pounds, one 280 pounds, and the third over 200 pounds. A bale of cotton of the finest quality was also exhibited by one John O. Hines, of Montserrado County. This was the first bale of cotton produced in the country.

In May, 1863, Daniel Bashiel Warner was elected President by the Republican Party, and with him James Priest as Vice-President. The inaugural ceremonies took place on the first Monday in January, 1864. In 1865 the Legislature passed the Ports of Entry Law in order to protect the customs revenues against foreign traders, who were in the habit of disregarding the revenue laws of the Republic. Foreign traders were therefore restricted to six ports on the coastline: Robertsport, Monrovia, Marshall, Buchanan (including the City of Edina), Greenville, and Cape Palmas.

About this time, too, it seemed that international trade had developed to some considerable extent between Liberia and Europe, especially with England. Raw products were bought and shipped not only in foreign bottoms to foreign markets, but also in ships owned by Liberian merchants and manned by some of our own citizens—vessels like the *Eusibia Roye*, owned by Edward Roye, later President of Liberia; the *Moses Shepard* and *James Hall*, owned by the McGill Brothers; the *Liberia*, or

*Goldelts' Schooner*, purchased by the firm of Payne and Yates. The *Eusibia Roye* was the first to display the *Lone Star* in the ports of Liverpool and New York.

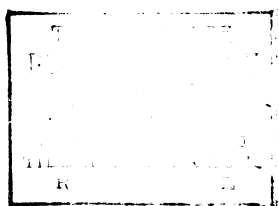
In addition to the English coastal traders, there were three other foreign trading houses that seemed already to have been well established in the Republic. These were the two Hamburg houses of Woermann, and Hedler. They were established in 1850 in the early days of Liberia, and seemed to have grown with the growth of the Republic. The other trading house which was also established in the country in those early days was a Dutch company owned by Henrick Muller, of Rotterdam. These business houses have played no inconsiderable part in the economic life of the State. While they have grown into stalwart business houses from the wealth of the country, yet they have always manifested a friendly spirit towards Liberia. They now stand as a link between the past and the present economic life of the nation, and are among the leading foreign trading houses in the Republic.

In 1865 the West Indians first made their appearance in the country. About 300 immigrants, mostly from Barbados, arrived at Monrovia. Nearly all of them were settled in the township of Crozierville, in Montserrado County. In 1867, James Spriggs Paynes, of Monrovia, was elected President of Liberia by the Republican Party, and with him Joseph T. Gibson, of Cape Palmas, as Vice-President. They were inaugurated on the first Monday in January, 1868. Payne only served his country one term (1868-69). One of the most important undertakings during Payne's Government was to secure the extension of the territorial limits of Liberia, and to have a definite boundary fixed in the hinterland. But the money to defray the expense of this enterprise was given by some American friends, chiefly Henry M. Schiefflin.

Accordingly on February 14th, 1868, Benjamin J. K. Anderson, former Secretary of the Treasury in Warner's Government, and an excellent surveyor, started on his journey from Monrovia. After leaving Monrovia, Anderson journeyed eastward to Bopolo, the town of King Sao Bosuan, the old friend of the colonists. He then went by a zigzag route to the town of Gbesse, the then capital of the Taywor country. Leaving Taywor, he proceeded northerly through Gbandi and to Dama Buzi, making Zigekpolo-Zue, or Zigeda, his headquarters. From this point he travelled over a country of parklands, ascending to a plateau of an altitude of 2,200 feet. At the town of Bulata, which was built on a mountain of about 2,253 feet high, Anderson passed beyond the limits of oil palms. He was now in an open country of grasslands, with a dry atmosphere and a healthy climate. The people of this section of country were Mandingoes, horse-breeders and riders of horses. Here Anderson made treaties with the Kings of the country, by which they placed their territories within the limits of Liberia. The originals of these treaties are all written in Arabic. They were brought down and kept in the State Depart-

ment. Through these journeys and treaties of Anderson and also his subsequent journey in 1874, Liberia has claimed a hinterland territory extending from Musadu in the west to the Upper Cavalla River, near Mount Druple, in the east, which is about 3,000 metres, or 9,840 feet, in altitude. Some of these territories have, however, subsequently been forcibly taken away from us; yet there is the hope within the breast of every true Liberian that the day will come when these lands and more beside will again fall to the Republic.

In January, 1872, Roberts became once more President of Liberia, and was succeeded in 1876 by James S. Payne. The Republican Party had now got to its limit; overcome by the caste system, pride, and lack of ability to intelligently appreciate the aspirations and ambitions of the masses, they soon gave way to the Whigs—a party with a more liberal and constructive policy.





**PRESIDENT KING**

## CHAPTER XIII.

### Whig Administrations.

On the first Monday in January, 1870, Edward J. Roye was inaugurated President, and with him James S. Smith as Vice-President. Roye was elected in May, 1869, in a very hotly contested campaign. During this time dissatisfaction and discontent were rife among the people through the misrule of the Republican Party. The Republicans had already built up a caste system. The official classes now regarded themselves as patricians, whilst the masses or common people of the Americo-Liberians, including the Congoes, were looked upon as plebians in the old Roman sense. The original populations, or natives, were not by them considered at all. Society therefore became divided into four distinct orders: the official class (including the big traders), the common people, the Congoes, and the natives. Social intercourse and marriages among these groups were by custom forbidden. Men of light complexion were, moreover, preferred to their brothers in ebony. The Republicans held that the climate was more severe on the colonists with lighter complexion than on the blacks, and that for this reason the pure blacks should go to the soil for subsistence, whilst his brother with blue veins remain in the Government offices to conduct the affairs of the State. This policy, therefore, called forth a sharp resentment from the blacks, and resulted in the organisation of the True Whig Party.

In 1869 this new Party nominated in its Convention Edward J. Roye for President, and James S. Smith, of Edina, Grand Bassa, for Vice-President. Prior to this time there had been a political organisation known as the *Old Whigs*, founded perhaps at the very beginning of the Republic in opposition to another party called the *True Liberian*, but with very little influence. But it was now that the Whig Party became reorganised and christened itself "The True Whig Party." It was not difficult to foresee that the True Whigs would soon increase numerically by accessions from the poorer classes and capture the Government. The True Liberian Party, therefore, in order to avert this danger and to gain strength numerically by immigrants from the United States, changed its name from the *True Liberian* to the *Republican* Party. They knew that the Negroes in the United States were either Republicans or Democrats, and that a Democrat coming to Liberia not finding his own party would more readily join the Republican Party than affiliate with the Whigs.

But the Republican Party's hopes were not fulfilled. For during the Presidential campaign in 1869 the Whigs had larger accessions from the poorer classes than there were immigrants



from the United States. Roye, who had been Chief Justice, but forced to resign on account of political differences, now joined the Whigs. Roye was also a flourishing merchant, a ship-owner, and a full-blooded Negro. So the Whigs placed him at the head of their party, Payne being the Republican candidate. At the polls in May, 1869, the Republicans were defeated and the Whigs captured the Government. This gave the Republicans no little annoyance. Many secret plots were now made to overthrow Roye's Government. When Roye came into office he planned to borrow money from England and open up the interior. Accordingly a loan of one hundred thousand pounds sterling (£100,000) was negotiated with a firm of bankers introduced by David Chinery, the Liberian Consul-General, in London, and Henry W. Johnson and W. S. Anderson, Commissioners appointed by President Roye for the purpose. The loan of £100,000 was to carry interest at seven per cent., and to be repaid over a period of fifteen years. An amount equal to three years' interest was also to be deducted from the loan. Of the balance of the sum to be received, £20,000 was to be used in buying up all the checks, currency debentures and all Government papers of whatever kind then afloat; £20,000 was to be deposited in some reliable bank as a basis for the issuance of Treasury Notes; the remainder to be also placed into a bank as an emergency fund, to be used when necessary by special authorisation from the Legislature. The loan was to be guaranteed on the customs' revenues.

At the time when the Legislature authorised the President to negotiate a loan (January 26th, 1870), Roye was about to go to England to discuss the long-disputed boundary question of the Gahlinas and Sherbro territories. And it was hoped that he would himself attend to the business while in London. But for some reason or other he did not take up the matter until his return to Monrovia. The whole affair was very badly managed by Chinery and the bankers, and not more than twenty thousand pounds sterling (£20,000) was actually received by the Government. The people became very much dissatisfied over the whole question, and particularly so when it became known that the President would give his approval to the scheme. The leaders of the Republican Party now wickedly circulated false statements throughout the country that the President had received a portion of the money raised by the loan, and for which reason he had given the scheme his approval. But afterwards this was found to be wholly untrue, and that it was only a political ruse which the Republicans had advanced in order to overthrow Roye's Government, and put the Whigs out of office.

The country was in this disturbed condition when Roye offered himself in May the following year (1871) for re-election. At the same time the Whigs thought that the country would escape many financial setbacks brought about by frequent political upheavals if the term of the President were extended from two to four years. Accordingly in December, 1870, the President requested the Legis-

lature to pass an Act to amend the Constitution, extending the term of President to four years. This Act was passed in January, and in May the amendment was submitted to the electorate for adoption. The election returns plainly showed that the Whigs had carried the country, and that Roye had been returned by an overwhelming majority. While the Republicans admitted their defeat at the polls, yet they contended that the Constitutional amendment had not been adopted. The Whigs, on the other hand, held that the amendment had been adopted.

In October, 1871, Roye issued a proclamation declaring that the Constitutional amendment had received the approval of the majority of the electorate, and that the term of office for the President had been accordingly extended to four years. A loud cry soon arose from the people in Monrovia and Grand Bassa against Roye for usurpation of power. It was also alleged that Roye aimed at making himself a Dictator in the Republic. There was now a great political disturbance in the country. The Republican leaders armed many of their followers, and led them to the Executive Mansion to overthrow the Government. Both factions now met on the streets of Monrovia and had a hand-to-hand fight. The mad crowd soon appeared before Roye's private residence and sent a cannon ball through it. The house was ransacked, and Roye himself seized and thrown into prison.

But the President did not stay here long, for the prison-keeper, an appointee of his, soon allowed him to make his escape. On the next morning it was reported about the city that the President had escaped prison. A search was made all about the place to locate the President's whereabouts. The news soon came that the President had been seen on Krutown beach trying to make his way to an English ship which was then in harbour. Several armed men immediately rushed to Krutown beach, where they discovered President Roye in a Kru canoe with a Kru boy, rapidly making for the ship. The men fired their guns at them, but hit no one. The Kru boy, however, being frightened to death, leaped overboard, whereupon the canoe capsized. Meanwhile the angry crowd on the beach had already despatched several Krumen in their canoes to fetch the President ashore. It was at this time that Roye received several cruel blows from the hands of those savages. Roye was seized, beaten in the sea, and before being brought ashore finally robbed of his money, which he had strung about his loins. Upon reaching the shore his enemies seized him and dragged his almost lifeless body naked in the city. It is said that his wife, for the respect of her husband, ran out in the street with a quilt, and with her back turned threw it over her husband to cover his nakedness. The angry mob struck him to the ground and dashed him into prison, where the President soon expired. One of his sons was also thrown into prison with him. Roye's Government was now overthrown, and several high officials placed under arrest. James S. Smith, the Vice-President, who was at his home in Grand Bassa at the time, was threatened with impeachment and

even bodily injury should he attempt to force his rights to the Presidency. The Whigs having been thrown out of office, the Republicans now set to work to establish a Provisional Government until the meeting of the Legislature. A committee of three was appointed—composed of Amos Herring, R. A. Sherman and C. B. Dunbar—to temporarily administer the affairs of the Government, while H. R. W. Johnson, formerly Secretary of Interior in Roye's Government, was appointed Secretary of State.

The Legislature met on the first Monday in December, 1871, and confirmed all the actions of the Republican leaders; and in a joint convention re-elected ex-President J. J. Roberts President of Liberia for the fifth time. Roberts took his seat on the first Monday in January, 1872. The Republicans again came into power and office, and continued to administer affairs of Government until the end of 1877. Jiggers came into this country during the Republican Administration in 1876.

The Presidential election was held in 1877. The Whigs had now recovered from their misfortunes. They brought out A. W. Gardner, of Edina, for their Presidential nominee, and Alfred F. Russell, of Clay Ashland, for Vice-President. The Republicans in their convention nominated Payne, who was still President. This was a hotly contested election. In order to completely defeat the Republicans, the Whigs brought in the Congo votes and offered them a seat in the House of Representatives. In May, 1877, the two great political parties met at the polls for the last time. The Republicans were so badly defeated that unto this day none has ever dared to raise a voice against the Whigs. Gardner took over the Government the first Monday in January, 1878, and from this time the Whigs have had their own way in the Republic. Of course, now and again the country has witnessed sporadic uprisings of these Republicans, under assumed names, such as "People's Party" and the like. The Republican Party, being more of a *Conservative* party, very much disliked to see any individual not a direct descendant of the Pioneer Fathers hold official position in the State. But the Whig Party is more *liberal*, and their policy towards the Congoes and the indigenous population being assimilatory, they always got their sympathy and assistance to put the Republican Party out of existence.

In the year 1879, President Gardner, after he had been made a Knight Grand Cross of the Spanish Order of Isabella Catolica, established an order of chivalry, called the Order of African Redemption. It is divided into three grades: the Knight Official, the Knight Commander, and the Knight Grand Band. This last is conferred only on Sovereigns and high officials of State.

March 20th, 1882, was Liberia's unlucky day, and this month has since been regarded as such. And this evil influence which March usually brings, is sometimes either let loose as a forerunner in the month of February against the Republic, or a week after March ends, as a farewell signal. The leaders of the country do not usually pay much attention to this strange phenomenon. But

it is nevertheless true. However, on the 20th of March, 1882, England having decided to extend her influence over the Sherbro and Mano territories and also to force Liberia to pay an indemnity to John Myers Harris for alleged losses said to have been sustained during the Gahlinas war of 1871, Sir Arthur Havelock, British Consul-General for Liberia and also Governor of Sierra Leone, came to Monrovia with four gunboats and demanded that the Government should at once give its consent to allow the boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia to extend to the Mafa River, and also pay immediately the so-called "Harris" and "Mano River" claims, amounting to some £8,500 sterling. Bitter feelings immediately arose in the country against British treachery.

In 1862 the British Government, through Lord Russell, acknowledged the territorial rights of Liberia to extend to the Gahlinas territory. While the British Government did not admit Liberian rights to territories west of Muttru, yet in 1870 Lord Granville had promised President Roye that a mixed commission would be appointed by both Governments to meet at Sulima River to discuss the claims of Liberia to the territories farther west. Roye accepted this proposal, but was unable to carry it into effect on account of internal troubles which were known to British traders and official England as well.

Despite these facts, England, with her "might make right" unjust policy towards weaker States, determined to take away all the Liberian territories west of Cape Mount. So in March, 1882, Sir Arthur Havelock, charged with this mission, came to Monrovia with four gunboats for the purpose. Gardner, now overawed by this British demonstration, appointed Dr. Edward W. Blyden, then Secretary of Interior, to arrange the basis of an understanding with the British Colonial Governor. This Commission recommended first that Liberia abandon her rights to territories west of the Mano River; second, that an indemnity be paid to John Harris and the other British traders supposed to have suffered from the Gahlinas war of 1871, and third, that the British Government repay to Liberia all the sums spent by her in acquiring the territories west of the Mano River since 1849. This treaty was signed, and Sir Arthur Havelock returned to Sierra Leone with his gunboats. But these proposals aroused violent opposition, and the Senate rejected the treaty at a session called soon afterwards.

On September 7th of the same year, Sir Arthur Havelock again returned to Monrovia with his four gunboats to demand the ratification of the Blyden-Havelock Treaty. But the Government raised two grounds of defence:—

- (1) That if the contested territory was British, why did the British Government claim from Liberia an indemnity for acts of violence amongst the natives which had taken place thereon?
- (2) If, however, Liberia acknowledged her responsibility, as she had done, and agreed to pay an indemnity, why should

she, in addition, be deprived of territories for the law and order of which she was held responsible, and which were hers by acts of purchase admitted by the British Government?

The treaty was then again submitted to the Senate for ratification, but the Senate again rejected it, and Havelock sailed away with his gunboats to Sierra Leone with a threat of forcible annexation. President Gardner was so much upset over this affair that he resigned on January 20th, 1883. Vice-President Alfred F. Russell was accordingly sworn into office as President of Liberia. In March, 1883, about two months after Gardner's resignation, the Sierra Leone Government seized the territories between Sherbro and the Mano River on behalf of the British Government, territories which from first to last had cost the Liberian treasury in all twenty thousand pounds (£20,000) sterling.

In May, 1883, Hiliary Richard Wright Johnson, the son of Elijah Johnson, was unanimously elected by both political parties—the Whigs and the Republicans—to the office of President. He was inaugurated the first Monday in January, 1884. Soon the leaders in both parties became eager to know with which of the two political parties the Government would affiliate, as both had contributed to his election into office. The question was advanced by Henry W. Good, the National Chairman of the True Whig Party, and the President was asked to declare himself. Johnson declared himself and his Government Whigs. Thus all doubts were removed and an end was put to the issue.

In 1884 the French Government indicated their intention to extend the scattered French possessions on the Ivory Coast to the British Gold Coast on the east, and the Cavalla River on the west, the latter embracing a territory about sixty miles from the Cavalla, and purchased by the former State of Maryland in Liberia. These intentions on the part of the French Government were subsequently formulated into a decree published in the *Bulletin des Lois* in 1885. French Imperial ambition had already been foreshadowed in the early eighties. So immediately upon taking office, Johnson determined to secure that territory lying between the Cavalla and the San Pedro River against French aggression. Preparations were accordingly made for occupation. But before this could be done, a rebellion broke out in Grand Bassa in 1884, and Johnson was compelled to abandon his intention of occupying the San Pedro territory and despatch an expeditionary force to the rebellious county. The French, however, did not carry out their intentions until 1891.

In 1885 President Johnson's attitude towards the British Government became changed. In that year he accepted the Blyden-Havelock Treaty on the settlement of the Mano River question and requested its ratification by the Senate. By this treaty the north-western boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia was placed at the Mano River instead of the Mapha, as had been intended by the British Government.

Joseph James Cheeseman, of Edina, Grand Bassa County, succeeded President Johnson at the close of his term of office. Cheeseman was nominated for President by the Whig Convention in Montserrado County in 1891, and with him William David Coleman, of Clay Ashland, for Vice-President. Anthony D. Williams, of Monrovia, was a Whig, but refused to support Cheeseman, and became candidate for the Presidency in the opposition party. Anthony Williams was a very popular man in Monrovia and also in Montserrado County. He was the son of A. D. Williams, the much-respected Governor of the colony, and greatly admired by all classes. But owing to Williams's deportment in social relations in the community, he could never get the hearty support of the masses. He ran twice against his own party candidate for the Presidency and was each time severely defeated.

Cheeseman was installed in office as Chief Magistrate of the nation on the first Monday in January, 1892. During his incumbency, Cheeseman strove hard to place the country on a better financial basis. The currency system which was in vogue at the time was soon abolished, and all taxes and customs dues were made payable in gold and silver coin. Two gunboats—the *Rocktown* and the *Goronama*—were purchased from England to run along the coast and keep foreign ships from smuggling goods in non-ports of entry.

The second difficulty with the Gedeboes of Cape Palmas arose during Cheeseman's administration in 1893. This disaffection was formed and led by one Wisner, of Cavalla. General J. D. Jones, of Clay Ashland, was therefore despatched with an expeditionary force of about six hundred men from Montserrado County to the seat of disaffection. After a desperate struggle in September of that year the Gedeboes were compelled to sue for peace. The terms of peace were dictated by the President himself. Cheeseman had many great plans for the development of his country, but did not live to carry them out; he died in the middle of his third term of office, on November 15th, 1896.

Coleman, the Vice-President, succeeded Cheeseman as President. He served the unexpired term of the President, and was himself elected to fill his own term in May, 1897. Coleman came from poor antecedents, but had a strong will-power and firm determination, so he rose step by step to the Chief Magistracy of the nation. During his administration educational interest in the country was revived, and through the inspiration of Dr. Edward W. Blyden he re-opened Liberia College, the State School, and maintained it by subsidies, principally from piassava duty. At this time it seemed the educational interest had been greatly awakened in the country. Many young men and women flocked to the college seeking higher education. Very good work was done at Liberia College at this time, and several of the young men who graduated there became leaders of the Republic.

The reformation of the customs service had its beginning at this time, and the bonded warehouse system was also established for

the better collection of the customs duties. Coleman's interior policy was, however, unpopular. Soon hot displeasure arose between the President and Legislature. Matters now grew worse in December, 1900. The Legislature became very impatient with the President at this time. The President, therefore, without awaiting any further complications with the House, tendered his resignation during the early days of the session in December, 1900.

J. J. Ross, of Sinoe, the Vice-President, had died. Robert H. Marshall, of Grand Cape Mount, was Speaker of the House of Representatives, and according to the Statute of 1873, he was entitled to succession in the absence of the Vice-President. But Marshall was slow, and always late in getting to the House, so he lost the office of President.

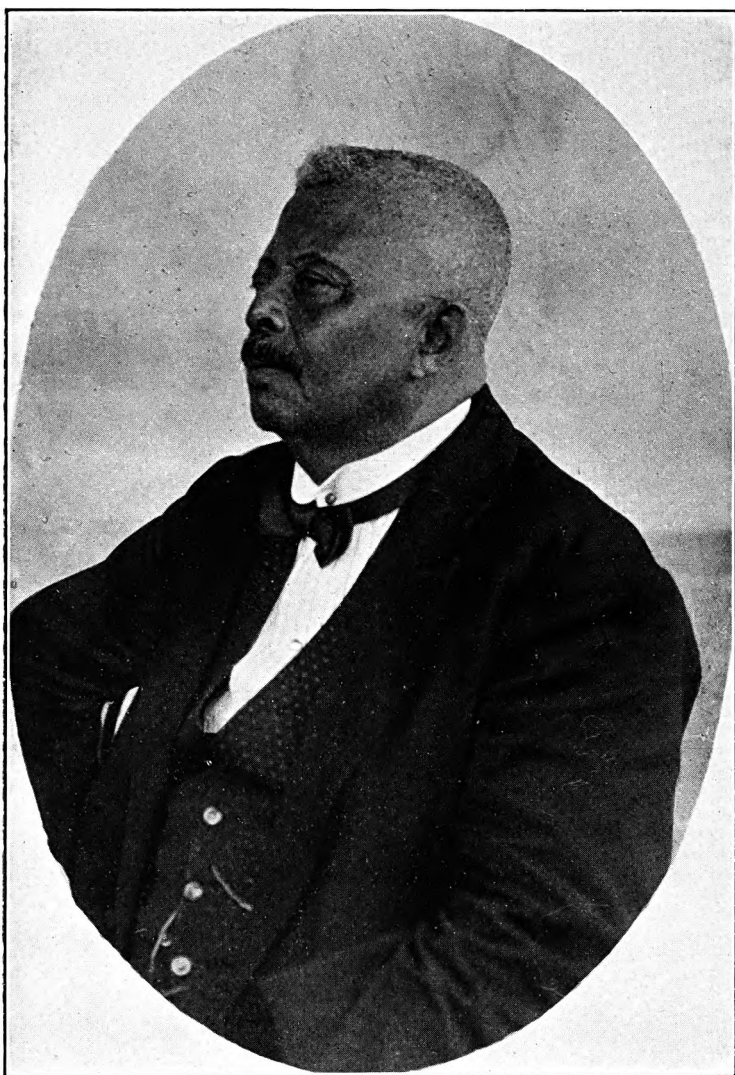
In December, 1900, after the President's resignation, the Legislature passed a Joint Resolution placing succession to the office of President in the Cabinet. Garretson Warner Gibson, of Monrovia, who was then Secretary of State, was, pursuant to law, inducted in office to serve the unexpired term of the President. Gibson was regularly elected to the Presidency in May, 1901, and was inaugurated in January, 1902, together with Joseph D. Summerville, of Buchanan, as Vice-President. His Government was marked with prudence and moderation. Official changes were few, but many political dissensions. This was caused principally by the grant of mining rights to the Union Mining Company, an English company, in conjunction with a few citizens of Liberia, about sixteen in all, to carry on mining operations in the country. A rumour soon became afloat that the members of the company in Liberia had sold the country, and for which they had received each the sum of one hundred pounds sterling. Indignation soon ran high in the country against the company. Many threats were also made against the officials of the Government who were shareholders in the company. A deputation of about two hundred men, led by Anthony Williams, J. W. Toles, William Henry King, and Robert Sherman, collected themselves before the President with threats and a demonstration of violence, and demanded that President Gibson call for the resignation of such officials who were members of the company. A few days thereafter rumours became current in the city that about one hundred pounds sterling had been placed into the hands of the principal leader of the opposition. Nothing thereafter was further heard of the affair. In reality the whole matter was merely political, and an attempt to overthrow the Whig Government by the opposition party. This effort, however, proved abortive, and at the next general elections the Whigs won a further lease of power from the people.

During Gibson's administration the northern boundary was surveyed by a mixed commission of Great Britain and Liberia. Colonel Anthony D. Williams was appointed as head of this commission to represent the interests of the people of Liberia. The commission did good work on the boundary, much to the credit of Colonel Williams.

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**CHIEF-JUSTICE F. E. R. JOHNSON**

In 1903 the canvass was exceedingly spirited. The Whigs nominated by acclamation Arthur Barclay for President, and with him Vice-President Joseph D. Summerville, of Buchanan. The Republicans reorganised into a "People's Party" and nominated for President ex-President William David Coleman, and Summerville, the Whig Vice-President, for the second place. The elections resulted in favour of the Whigs. Arthur Barclay was accordingly inaugurated President of Liberia on the first Monday in January, 1904.

Mr. Barclay had arisen from a very humble station in life. During his boyhood days, with books in hand, he managed to support the family after his father's death. He had a very strong passion for books, and a great ambition to get an education. So by dint of hard labour and assiduous application to his studies he rose from a salt-seller to the most exalted position in the State. His Administration aimed at progress and general improvements in the country. To carry out his plans he secured authority from the Legislature to negotiate a loan in England of one hundred thousand pounds sterling (£100,000). The money was obtained from the Development Company, but after its failure, transactions were made directly with Messrs. Erlangers and Company, the lenders of the loan.

During his Administration the Frontier Force was established, a military organisation which has rendered much valuable service to the Republic. At this period the northern section of the country was brought under the authority of the Monrovia Government, and the hinterland regularly organised for administrative purposes. This was accomplished chiefly by the Frontier Force, under the command of Colonel William D. Lomax and District Commissioner John W. Cooper. It was through the efforts of these two men that the northern section of the hinterland was brought under the authority of the Government. Several important amendments to the Constitution of the Republic were also made during this administration. The term of the President was extended from two years to four; the members of the House of Representatives four years; while that of the Senators was increased from four to six years. But President Barclay's foreign and interior policies were never understood by the people, and were always misrepresented by his political opponents. He was the first President to be elected to the Presidency for a term of four years.

Daniel Edward Howard, of Monrovia, took over the Government in January, 1912. He was inaugurated on the 2nd day of January of that year, together with Samuel George Harmon, of Lower Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, as his Vice-President. The canvass of this campaign was a very exciting one. The Republicans put up James Jenkins Dossen for President. Dossen was a True Whig. He, however, allowed his name to be used by the Republicans. After he was nominated at the Republican Convention in the latter part of January, 1911, he made a very strong

fight in the campaign. Many True Whigs, dissatisfied for having been overlooked in the distribution of the offices after the last political campaign, joined the Republicans. This time, fearing lest they might again be defeated, they named their party "National Whigs." They were, however, defeated by a large majority at the polls in May, 1911.

Daniel Edward Howard came to power at a very inopportune time. It was not long before he met serious difficulties with foreign powers. In 1913, three German gunboats arrived in the port of Monrovia, and although all these gunboats carried saluting guns, none of them saluted the Liberian flag in keeping with international usage. It therefore meant the assumption of an hostile attitude to Liberia, notwithstanding that from early times up to that moment the Government and people of Liberia had always shown a very kindly spirit to all the citizens of Germany.

It happened in 1912 that about a dozen persons, residents of the township of Brewerville, broke open some shops belonging to German traders in that district and committed larceny. As a coincidence, a few robberies were also committed on some German stores on the Kru coast by some Krumen who took and carried away a few hundred dollars in merchandise. Notwithstanding that all these parties were judicially dealt with by the authorities, a Commission for the investigation of these German claims, composed of J. A. Odin, a Frenchman, Fritz Specht, a German, and James F. Cooper, a Liberian, was appointed by both the German and Liberian Governments. None of these efforts, however, on the part of the Liberian Government satisfied the Imperial German Government. So in 1913, three German gunboats were despatched to Monrovia to demand indemnity for the loss of the goods of the German trading houses, the immediate dismissal from office of Captain Horace, of Buchanan, who was in command of the military detachment at River Cess, and an apology to the German Government by the Government of Liberia, through the Secretary of State, who was to deliver this apology in writing to Baron Grotte, the German Consul at Monrovia. Charles D. B. King, then Secretary of State, delivered this apology in person to save his country from serious difficulties with the German Government.\*

There were many other grave difficulties which confronted the Administration when Mr. Howard took over the Government. The very first was the Refunding Loan Agreement of 1912. There were two obligations to British creditors and both drawing considerable interest, and in addition to these there had also grown a considerable local debt; real bankruptcy seemed to threaten the State. In order to pay off all these obligations, the Liberian Government approached the Government of the United States for a loan of \$1,700,000. The United States, however, did not furnish the loan, but used its good offices in perfecting an arrangement

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\*See Appendix "A."

whereby certain banking institutions of the United States, Germany, France, Holland and Great Britain furnished Liberia with the amount of \$1,700,000. In order to secure the loan, the customs revenues, revenues from imports and exports, duties on rubber and head moneys, were pledged. Five per cent. gold bonds in the denominations of \$1,000, \$500 and \$100, for a period of forty years, interest and principal payable in New York, were issued by the Liberian Government. The revenues subject to the loan were transferred for its service, and termed "assigned revenues." These assigned revenues were placed in charge of a customs' receivership, with a General Receiver appointed from the United States by the President, and holding office during his pleasure; and three receivers, one each from Great Britain, Germany and France, appointed by and holding office during the pleasure of their respective Governments. The General Receiver was also to act as the Financial Adviser to the Republic. The debts of the Republic were soon paid by the bonds. The bankers for their services received their out-of-pocket expenses, legal charges, commission on the face value of the five per cent. bonds, and five per cent. on the bonds purchased by themselves.

This financial arrangement was not the best that could have been made in the money markets of Europe; but, on the whole, it was the possible best, and caused general satisfaction throughout the Republic. It released the people from dangerous obligations to creditors whom they regarded as hungry land grabbers, and engendered a feeling that there was the beginning of a closer relationship between the United States and Liberia—a relationship which had been long sought for, especially by the descendants of the Pioneer Fathers from America. It must also be admitted that the Government realised a much larger percentage of actual funds than in any of its preceding financial undertakings with European bankers. In addition to these gains, the Republic also had the advantage of the services and advice of a Financial Adviser, especially when Mr. Sidney de la Rue took over the administration of the customs affairs. Certainly Mr. de la Rue is entitled to the gratitude of the nation for his invaluable services rendered to Liberia in his capacity as Financial Adviser to the Government of the Republic.

The Howard Administration had also other drawbacks in the years 1917 and 1918. There were internal troubles, which came mostly from the Krus and the Golas. The Gola war grew from the imposition of the hut tax during the outbreak of the Great European War. It was commonly known as the "Kangha War," because the medicine on which the principal Kings and leaders engaged in the war swore was called "Kangha." This Gola trouble, however, did not last long, but was soon settled after a few military engagements and the sacking of the principal towns. The Krus were more determined than the Golas in opposing the authority of the Government. Major Stuard did good services on the Kru coast during these trying times. He fought the Krus

with the most dogged resolution, and finally subdued the hostile tribes, with the principal assistance of Major Ballard, an American officer of the Frontier Force. Major Stuard had always been a brave soldier and given many invaluable services to the Republic. Just before the final onset, the major became severely wounded and was expected to die at any moment, but recovered within a few months and returned to the seat of disaffection. Notwithstanding all the many wounds he had received during this period and before in other wars against the Buzis, the major was undaunted, and remained at the front in service until the Krus surrendered.

On the 10th day of April, 1918, about eight months after the German captives had been surrendered to the Allies, Monrovia was greatly alarmed by the sudden appearance in its harbour that early morning of a German submarine gunboat ready to open fire on the city. They first came stealthily and seized the *President Howard*, a small revenue patrol boat used on the coastwise service. Two of the men on board were so dreadfully frightened that they leaped into the sea; one of them was drowned, while the other swam ashore and hurriedly ran to the Executive Mansion to tell the President his story. When he got to the Mansion it was about four o'clock in the morning, April 10th, 1918.

Early that morning, after the break of day, Commander Gerche sent a communication to President Howard in a small fishing boat he had captured off Sierra Leone while on his way to Liberia, demanding the surrender of the English and French residents, the hauling down of the French flag floating at the mast poll over the French wireless station, and the dismantling of the said station and thereafter packing and taking the apparatus of the station on board the submarine. A reply was also demanded before eleven o'clock, otherwise he would open fire on the wireless station at that hour. A conference of the Cabinet and all the Allied Representatives in Monrovia became therefore necessary. The President also invited some of the leading citizens who were present in the city to deliberate over the crisis and assist in arriving at an immediate conclusion for the safety of the State. The British representative advised the acceptance of the German demand, and thereby save the city and the lives of the women and children. But the President and his Cabinet felt that, having declared with the Allies and the Associated Powers to prosecute the war against the Germans, it would be treachery on the part of Liberia, though on this direful day when her capital city was defenceless and without any means of self-protection against hostile invasion, to surrender her Allies to the mercy of the enemy. Precisely at eleven o'clock that morning the fatal word "No" was sent by ex-Secretary of War, Wilmost E. Dennis, and Mayor Thomas Faulkner, from the President to Commander Gercke. About one o'clock he sank the Liberian patrol boat, *President Howard*, and about four o'clock that afternoon the submarine opened fire on the city, but mainly on the French wireless station on South Beach.

The whole city was now in a great commotion. Men, women, children, and even Bishops were seen running promiscuously over the streets in various directions. It is said that a distance which it was believed could not be made under five hours by pedestrians, was on this occasion easily covered within an hour. Many persons who had not taken their early morning flight to the woods, were now seen scampering here and there to save their lives. Every city on the littoral was exposed to this great danger. There was not a fort anywhere in the Republic which could be relied on to repel the hostile attack from the enemy. So the German guns thundered and roared, echoing and re-echoing like the distant peal of a great lightning thunderstorm. The Germans had it all their way. Liberia had suddenly fallen into the hands of her enemy without even a single friend near by to render her any assistance. The State Department in vain sent cable messages to the Allied Governments to send help to the defenceless city; the reply received was, "no warship available." It was as though Liberia had been made a sacrificial offering for her Allies. Commander Gercke prophetically remarked that morning that if the refusal of Liberia to comply with his demands was based upon the expectation of getting any help from the Allies, it was a serious mistake and would end in a disappointment. It happened that his prophecy became true, and not an Allied gunboat arrived in Liberian waters until about three weeks afterwards. The United States was the first to send to see what had become of Liberia. Fortunately for the Republic, on the day the bombardment was going on an English steamer, the s.s. *Burutu*, commanded by Captain Yardley, appeared off the cape just before nightfall. Soon a fierce engagement between the submarine boat and the English steamer took place. After nightfall the firing ceased, and both the submarine and the steamer disappeared from the harbour. A few days thereafter the city again resumed its normal course.

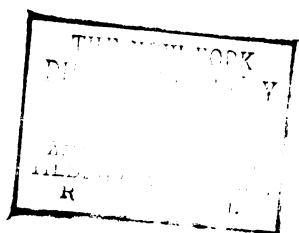
This, however, shows the necessity of a naval programme. Had Liberia been a naval state, the issues of this affair would have been decided on the high seas, and there might have been no destruction of houses and the casualty of lives during the bombardment. In order to secure Liberia's political and economic position on the Continent, she must become a strong naval and military power in Africa. A helpless nation is never respected, not even by the great Christian powers. The slogan of all the great Christian States is, "the survival of the fittest," which means the destruction and annihilation of the weak and helpless. Choose weakness and be destroyed, or choose fitness and gain life and power.

## CHAPTER XIV.

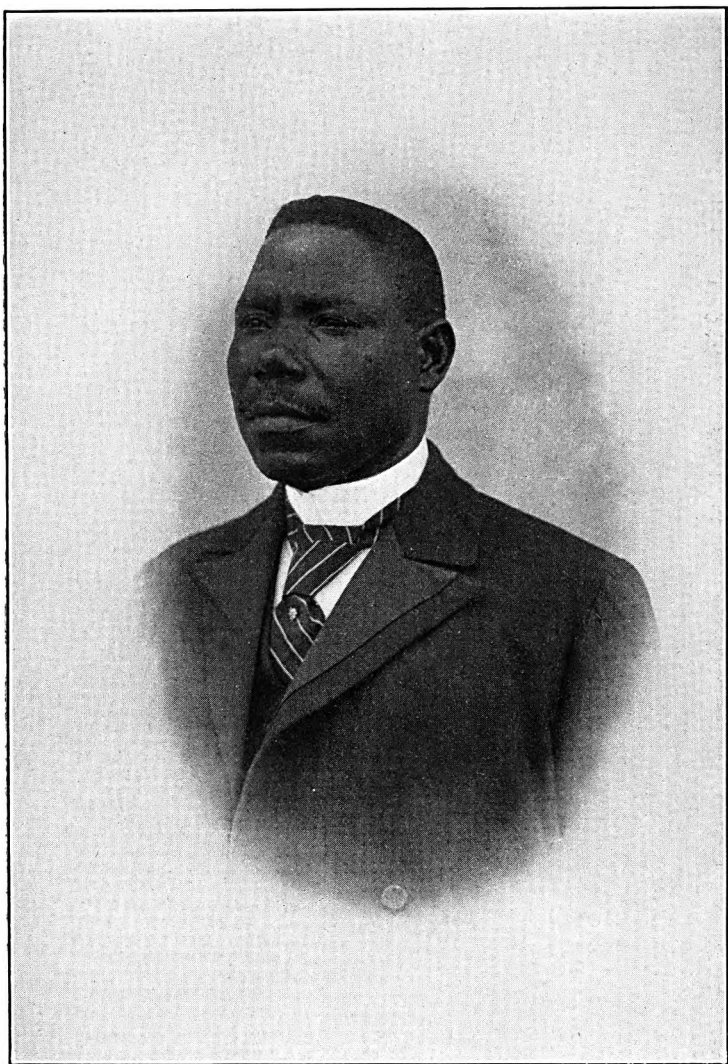
### Later Administrations.

On the first Tuesday in May, 1919, Charles Dunbar Burgess King, of Monrovia, was elected at the polls as President of Liberia. During this campaign the fight seemed to have been only spirited in the canvass and up to the National Caucus. The Whig Party at that time being the only political party in the country, every aspirant for the office of President tried to play a Whig, and was therefore submissive to the rules of that party. So that when a Whig caucus decided upon any particular candidate for an office, it was always considered absolute; the conventions merely ratified the decisions of the caucus. In December, 1918, the Whig National caucus decided at its annual meeting to support C. D. B. King for President at the general convention in January the following year, and Samuel A. Ross, of Sinoe, for Vice-President. Arthur Barclay, ex-President of Liberia, Chief Justice Dossen, and ex-Vice-President Samuel George Harmon, of Grand Bassa, who were the other aspirants for the Presidency, were therefore compelled to withdraw from the contest.

At the time when Mr. King took office, he inherited from the Howard's Administration the disagreeable American Loan Agreement to which President Howard had succeeded in getting the Whig Party to commit itself as a foreign economic policy. Having been elected by the Whig Party in May, 1919, C. D. B. King was in duty bound to effectively carry out this foreign economic policy of his party. In 1920 a definite proposal was submitted to the Government by the United States Secretary of State, through the American Legation at Monrovia. But the terms of the agreement were so harsh and severe and in many other respects interfered with the Constitutional arrangements of the Republic, that the Government of Liberia were compelled to reject the agreement of 1920 and offer a substitute. The President also recommended to the Legislature that a commission of three be appointed to take over the substitute agreement to the United States, and place the Liberian Government's point of view before that Government and conclude the negotiations. The official position of the Government was also communicated to the American Legation at Monrovia. The United States Government, however, suggested that the commission be headed by the President of the Republic, and that it would then be pleased to receive such diplomatic mission with the most friendly spirit. Fifteen thousand dollars were appropriated to defray the expenses of the commission. In January, 1921, the President left the Government in charge of the Cabinet under the direction of the Secretary of







**H. TOO WESLEY, VICE-PRESIDENT R. L.**

State, and proceeded with his commission to the United States by way of France. The commission was composed of F. E. R. Johnson, Associate Justice, and John Lewis Morris, former Secretary of the Treasury, with Gabriel L. Dennis as Secretary.

Strange enough, although the President and his commission arrived in Washington before the end of March, and were well received by President Harding, of the United States, they were unable to conclude the negotiations before November—a space of eight months. The negotiations were finally concluded, and the Loan Agreement was signed by Charles Hughes, Secretary of State, on the part of the United States, and President King, on the part of Liberia. The U.S.S. *Denver* was thereafter placed at the disposal of the commission to return them to Liberia. They arrived in Monrovia in December, 1921, after being away from home nearly a whole year, with heavy expenses to the nation. This new agreement, although by far a greater improvement in its terms on the first agreement, was, all the same, very distasteful to the nation. It received legislative endorsement only through the personal influence of the President, for although he invited all the leaders of the Whig Party to the Mansion and submitted the agreement to them, and a vote of thanks was tendered him and the commission for their patriotism and for getting better terms than those contained in the Loan Agreement of 1920, yet in the Presidential campaign of 1923 the "American Loan Agreement" was made one of the points of attack by a few of the leaders of the Whig Party who had bolted and organised themselves into the People's Party. Although Liberia kept faith and enacted that distasteful agreement into law, yet the conscience of the American Senate failed to support it, and the American Loan Agreement of five million dollars, which had been under negotiation from 1917 to 1921, became a failure. The failure of this 1921 loan agreement was considered in many quarters in Liberia as certainly providential. So in December, 1921, the President and his Cabinet decided as a policy the non-negotiation of any foreign loans, and the rehabilitation of the industries of the country by internal efforts. The failure to secure the American loan, however, "was regarded in some quarters," observed the *Sierra Leone Guardian*, January, 23rd, 1925, "as the tether of practical endeavours at which the best display of genius by the President and his advisers would have been nonplussed into an irreclaimable disaster."

The Cabinet at once introduced a policy of far-reaching reforms relative to the fiscal policy of the Republic. The President also recommended to the Legislature the establishment of new trade centres and customs stations on the frontiers of the country, the erection of first-class lighthouses at the ports of Monrovia, Cape Palmas and Sinoe, the improvement and construction of roads, and the reorganisation of agricultural associations for the development of the resources of the Republic. In order to consolidate his plans, President King undertook extensive and frequent tours.

into the country, holding conferences with the interior tribes and getting in touch with all the Kings and influential representatives of the people. In order that the Republic might not be embroiled with friendly neighbouring states, the President took decisive steps against the Marcus Garvey propaganda to make Liberia a centre of racial hatred and antagonism.

On January 21st, 1925, the President undertook an extensive journey through the hinterland by way of Sierra Leone. In order to assist in carrying out this object, the British Government placed at his disposal H.M.S. *Dublin*. In his speech to Governor Slater and the people of Sierra Leone the President observed:—

"The history of Liberia is the history of a community developing along lines of peaceful endeavours; and this community, both by tradition and inclination, is influenced rather by considerations which tend to secure and strengthen national existence, progress, and stability than racial Utopias.

"Liberians, standing alone and fighting their own national battles for the last hundred years, have developed a large political outlook and a national point of view. They fully realise and are conscious of the fact that Liberia's immediate objective is towards nationalism, and not racialism: the making of a nation, and not a race. As the United States of America has been the melting-pot from which has emanated a strong, vigorous, and united nation composed of every nationality in Europe, and of even the descendants of the various black tribes of Africa, so must Liberia be also the melting-pot for the members of our racial group in America, the West Indies, Sierra Leone, Accra, Lagos, and other parts of Africa, from which also may emanate a strong, vigorous and united African nation, with malice and ill-will towards none, but with love for all, contributing its quota towards the world's civilisation and the uplift of humanity.

"They can only say to their unfortunate brethren: 'Leave; come over and join us.' But in coming over, leave behind your respective peculiar problems, as we have sufficient of our own without new and additional ones being added to them. Break the bridges behind you, and think no more of the flesh-pots of Egypt. Come seeking assimilation and with a spirit to be helpful, to teach as well as to learn, and not in an attitude of carping criticism and contempt for our century of efforts at nation-building."

The year 1923 saw the birth of a new political party, styled "People's Party." The Presidential campaign during this year was indeed very spirited. The candidates brought out by the True Whigs were Charles D. B. King for President, and Henry Too Wesley, a native of the Gedebo tribe, Cape Palmas, for Vice-President; while the candidates of the People's Party were Samuel G. Harmon, of Grand Bassa, and Thomas J. R. Faulkner, of Monrovia, for President and Vice-President respectively. The whole campaign presented a huge struggle between the older elements which had been long in power and administering the affairs of the State, and the repressed element forging its way to the front.

Consequently the contest became very keen on both sides, but more especially with the leaders of the People's Party, who saw more clearly than the rest of their partisans the impending doom of the old order of things and the rapid approach of the new. They filled the atmosphere with many threats of assassinating the President, killing the principal leaders of the Whigs, and throwing bombs on election day. The Whigs, however, were indomitable, and carried the polls by a sweeping majority of forty-five thousand against six thousand—the largest majority any President ever received since the founding of the Republic. The verdict of the country was unquestionably for the continuance of the Whigs in power and the approval of the acts of the Administration. President King therefore succeeded himself, and was inaugurated on the 7th of January, 1924, with H. Too Wesley as Vice-President of Liberia, he being the first native or aborigine of the country to rise to such an elevated position.

THE END.



## APPENDIX "A."

KAISERLICH DEUTSCHES KONSULAT.

J. No. 887.

Monrovia,  
December 30th, 1912.

Dear Sir,

With your declaration of November 6th, the Government of the Republic of Liberia has taken over the guarantee for the protection of the life and property of all foreigners residing within the areas affected by the existing unrest.

This declaration of your Government has been accepted by my Government with despatch of November 12th, J. No. 700. The contents of the despatch have been carefully noted without any objection by your Department of State with its despatch No. 582 of November 14th.

In a verbal declaration of the 16th instant, you made me understand that the declaration of November 6th had to be interpreted in a restricted manner, that the indemnity for damages of property sustained by foreigners could be accorded only after an appeal has been made to the Liberian courts and without being made the subject of diplomatic intervention and in accordance with the law concerning the trade of foreigners interiorwards or coastwise beyond Ports of Entry.

In accordance with the instructions I have received from my Government, I have to declare that my Government cannot accept any restrictive interpretation of the first declaration, and that it holds the Liberian Government responsible for any damages sustained by German firms.

I respectfully beg in the name of my Government at the earliest date the declaration, whether the Liberian Government is willing to pay the damages sustained by German firms, of which I will hand particulars as soon as I have got them myself.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) BARON GROTE,  
*Imperial German Consul.*

The Hon. C. D. B. KING,  
*Secretary of State, R. L.,*  
Monrovia.

No. 1.  
Consular (F).

Department of State,  
Monrovia, Liberia,  
January 1st, 1913.

Dear Baron,

I have the honour, in keeping with my note to you of 30th of December last, to communicate to you the views of the Liberian Government on the subject matter of your despatch J. No. 881, dated the 29th of December.

1. The Liberian Government considers the discussion of claims of German subjects for losses alleged to have been sustained by them growing out of the disorders at River Cess and its adjacent coast quite premature at this time, since no claims whatever have, up to the present moment, been presented to the Liberian Government by German subjects; and until the presentation of such claims to the Liberian Government by German merchants and the former's refusal to admit and satisfy their claims, I respectfully submit that they could not be properly made a subject of discussion between the two Governments, especially upon the lines and to the extent indicated in your said despatch.

2. With reference to the declaration made in my despatch of November 6th, 1912, to your predecessor to the effect that "*the Government of Liberia guarantees protection to the life and property of all foreigners residing within the affected areas,*" and the construction placed upon it by your Government, I beg to say that the Liberian Government regrets that it cannot harmonize its views with the construction placed by your Government upon the declaration above quoted.

The Protection guaranteed by the Government of Liberia for the lives and property of foreigners residing within the affected areas is only the protection which such foreigners would be entitled to under the existing laws of Liberia, and further, only to such foreigners who were and are still legitimately residing and carrying on business with the disturbed areas.

The Government of Liberia is most firm in its conviction on this point, as it cannot at all imagine that the Imperial German Government would for a moment insist upon compensation being given to such of their subjects who might be residing and carrying on mercantile operations within the disturbed areas in open violation of the laws of the Republic, permitting foreigners to reside and trade at non-Ports of Entry. The Imperial German Government has always in the past lent its influence in securing from its subjects residing in Liberia full respect for the laws of the Republic. And the Liberian Government therefore has every confidence that your Government will continue such a correct and friendly policy.

However, as an evidence of the Liberian Government's sincere desire to meet as far as practicable the expressed wish of the Imperial German Government, and to also maintain those most friendly relations which have so uniformly in the past existed between the two Governments, I have been directed by His Excellency, the President, to state that upon presentation to the Liberian Government of the claims of German subjects for losses said to have been sustained by them, due to disorders at Brewerville, River Cess and its adjacent coast, it will admit liability for all claims to which German subjects may be entitled, provided that such claims be adjudicated either by the Liberian courts or by an International commission composed of one representative each from the American, British, French, German and Liberian Governments; and that the finding of the majority of the members of such a commission shall be final and binding alike upon the German and Liberian Governments.

I trust that this proposed solution of the difficulty will be acceptable to the Imperial German Government, whose relations with Liberia have always been of a most friendly character.

Please accept, dear Baron, the assurances of my most profound respects and high consideration.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

**BARON VON GROTE,**  
*Imperial German Consul,*  
Monrovia.

(Signed) **C. D. B. KING,**  
*Secretary of State.*

### MEMORANDUM.

Upon presentation to the Liberian Government of the claims of German subjects for losses said to have been sustained by them due to disorders at Brewerville, River Cess and its adjacent coast, it will admit its liability for all claims to which German subjects may be entitled under the existing laws of the Republic, as such claims may be adjudicated by the Liberian courts or by an International Commission composed of either one representative each from the American, French, and British Governments, or one representative each from the American, British, French, German and Liberian Governments, and the findings of the commission be final and binding alike upon the Governments of Liberia and Germany.

## KAISERLICH DEUTSCHES KONSULAT.

J. No. 34.

Monrovia,

January 6th, 1913.

Dear Sir,

With reference to our conversation from the 4th instant, I have the honour to give you the following statement:

The Imperial German Government is willing to regard the River Cess incident as adjusted by the dismissal of Captain Horace under the following conditions—

1. The Liberian Government expresses officially (by a note and by a call upon the undersigned) its apology for the incident and its regret for the delay; this incident was dealt with.

2. The dismissal of Captain Horace must be published twice in the *Official Gazette*.

3. A guarantee must be given that Horace is not to be employed again in any official service of the Republic.

I beg to ask to give me the reply till 12 m., the 7th instant appointing also the time at which the official call, as above mentioned, will be made.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) BARON GROTE,

*Imperial German Consul.*

The Hon. C. D. B. KING,  
*Secretary of State,*  
Monrovia.

No. 15.  
Consular (F).

Department of State,

Monrovia, Liberia,

January 7th, 1913.

Sir,

In answer to your despatch dated January 6th, which was delivered to this Department this morning, I have the honour to inform you that to my regret I cannot give you the answer of the Liberian Government to the demands of the Imperial German Government to-day, because His Excellency, Present Howard, is absent from Monrovia for reasons of health, and has to be consulted on this matter, but I can give you the assurance that the Government's answer will be handed to you not later than Thursday, the 9th, at noon.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,

*Secretary of State.*

BARON VON GROTE,  
*Imperial German Consul,*  
Monrovia.

No. 22.  
Consular (F).

Department of State,

Monrovia, Liberia,

January 8th, 1913.

Dear Baron Grote,

In consonance with my vote to you of yesterday, I have now the honour to communicate to you the views of the Liberian Government, on the conditions as set forth in your despatch dated the 9th of

January, upon which your Imperial Government is willing to regard the River Cess incident as adjusted by the dismissal of Captain Horace.

The Liberian Government, being desirous to give to the Imperial German Government every reasonable satisfaction in the matter of the River Cess incident, as well as to re-establish those close friendly relations which have heretofore existed between the two Governments, is not only disposed to concede to the dismissal of Captain Horace, as well as to the further demands contained in the first and second clauses of the conditions set forth in your said despatch, upon which your Government would be willing to have the incident referred to finally closed, but has already dismissed Captain Horace from the Frontier Force of the Republic.

His Excellency the President's letter of dismissal was sent down by the *New Port*, the Government's steam launch, on Sunday last, the 5th instant, to Major Ballard, to be handed in person to Captain Horace.

Now with reference to the third condition stipulated by your Imperial Government, I regret to state that the Liberian Government cannot give the required guarantee for the reason that no such inhibition to public office could be constitutionally imposed upon Captain Horace by the Liberian Executive, which the guarantee stipulated in article three involves, unless Captain Horace had been convicted of a criminal offence or impeached by the Legislature of the Republic. The Liberian Government is, however, quite willing to give its assurance to the Imperial German Government that Captain Horace will not be again reinstated in his position in the Frontier Force of the Republic. The dismissal of Captain Horace will first appear in the next issue of the *Liberia Official Gazette*, which will be published at the end of the present month, as the December issue of the paper is already published.

On to-morrow at 2 o'clock p.m., or such other time as may be more convenient to you, I shall take great pleasure in handing you in person at your Consulate the official letter expressing the regrets of the Liberian Government of the incident referred to and the delay attending its settlement.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,

BARON VON GROTE,

*Imperial German Consul,*  
Monrovia.

*Secretary of State.*

No. 23.  
Consular (F).

Department of State,  
Monrovia, Liberia,  
January 9th, 1913.

Sir,

It affords me great pleasure to inform you that I have been specially charged by His Excellency, the President of Liberia, to convey to the Imperial German Government, through your good self, the earnest apology of the Government of Liberia for the most unfortunate incident at River Cess on the evening of the 24th of November, 1912, between some of the men of the Liberian Frontier Force and a few of the marines of the Imperial Germany Navy; and to also express deep regrets for the delay attending the settlement of the incident by the Government of Liberia.

I am further charged to express the hope that the actions taken by the Government of Liberia towards the settlement of the incident will be quite satisfactory to the Imperial German Government, and assure the latter of the sincere and earnest desire of the former to

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re-establish and maintain those friendly relations which have heretofore existed between the Great German Empire and the Republic of Liberia.

With the renewed assurances of my most profound respects and high consideration, I beg to subscribe myself.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,

*Secretary of State.*

BARON VON GROTE,  
Imperial German Consul,  
Monrovia.

KAISERLICH DEUTSCHES KONSULAT.

J. No. 39.

Monrovia,

Dear Sir,

*January 10th, 1913.*

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 23 Consular (F) of the 9th instant.

I found this despatch with your card together when I returned from S.M.S. Bremen. I am very sorry that I could not wait longer than 3-45 p.m. on your call arranged for 3 p.m.

If it would be convenient to you, I shall take great pleasure in awaiting your call to-day.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) BARON GROTE,

The Hon. C. D. B. KING,  
*Secretary of State.*  
Monrovia.

*Imperial German Consul.*

Department of State,

Monrovia, Liberia,

Dear Baron Grote,

*January 10th, 1913.*

Your letter J. No. 39 of to-day's date just received this 12-20 m., and in reply beg to say that I was greatly disappointed yesterday when I called at your Consulate and was informed that you were out.

When I called it was exactly 3 p.m. by the Department's time. I shall, however, repeat the visit to-day at 4 p.m., when I hope I shall have the pleasure of meeting you.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,

BARON VON GROTE,  
*Imperial German Consul,*  
Monrovia.

*Secretary of State.*

No. 163.

Department of State,

Consular (F).

Monrovia, Liberia,

Sir,

*March 11th, 1913.*

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch J. No. 364, dated March 6th, intimating that the Imperial German Government has taken, with satisfaction, cognisance of the Liberian Government's declaration as set forth in my despatches to you on January 1st, No. 1, and January 15th, No. 32, with regard to the claims of German merchants for losses said to have been sustained by them, due to disorders at Brewerville, River Cess and its adjacent

coast, and that the proposition of the Liberian Government to submit the claims of German merchants to a commission will be readily accepted by the Imperial German Government on the condition that this commission is to be composed of three members, one of them a Liberian, one a German subject, appointed by their respective Governments, and an impartial Chairman, whom the Imperial German Government and the Liberian Government have mutually agreed upon to appoint in the person of Mr. Odin, the Superintendent of the French Wireless Station in Monrovia.

In reply, I beg to say that the above suggested modifications made by the Imperial German Government to the proposals set forth in my despatch of January 1st, No. 1, are accepted by the Liberian Government as well as the proposal of Mr. Odin, the Superintendent of the French Wireless Station at Monrovia, as the Chairman of the commission.

In order, however, to facilitate the work of the commission, the Liberian Government begs to submit the following points for the consideration of the Imperial German Government, which points should, in the opinion of the former, be definitely agreed upon and settled between the two Governments before the sitting of the commission.

1. Each Government shall pay the expenses of its own commission.
2. The Chairman or third member of the commission shall be allowed for his expenses the amount of twenty-five pounds (£25) sterling, which amount shall be equally borne and divided between the two Governments.  
Each Government shall deposit its portion of said amount in the Bank of British West Africa in the city of Monrovia.
3. The rulings and decisions of the commission, which must in all cases be rendered by majority of votes, shall be final and binding upon both Governments.
4. The commission shall only consider such claims of merchants that have been presented to the Liberian Government previous to the first meeting and final organisation of the commission, and which are based upon actual losses of cash, goods and produce in their several factories at the time of the disturbances above mentioned. Claims for outstanding indebtedness of shortage of factors shall not be considered.
5. The date of the payment of such portion of the claims as may be awarded against the Liberian Government by the commission shall be fixed by an agreement between the two Governments after the commission shall have given its final award. The Liberian Government agrees to pay an annual interest of five (5%) per centum on all unpaid balances of the amounts which may be awarded to the merchant claimants by the commission.
6. The commission must enter upon its duties not later than March of the present year.

With a full understanding upon the points above mentioned between the two Governments, I see no reasons why the commission should not be able to begin its work at a very early date.

I therefore embrace this opportunity of renewing to you, Mr. Consul, the assurance of my most profound respects and esteem, and in which sentiments I beg to subscribe myself

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,

*Secretary of State.*

**BARON VON GROTE,**  
*Imperial German Consul,*  
**Monrovia.**

## KAISERLICH DEUTSCHES KONSULAT.

J. No. 391.

Monrovia,

March 12th, 1913.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch No. 163 of the 11th instant, and to declare in the name of my Government that it agrees to the points one to six submitted for its consideration.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew the assurances of my high consideration and in which sentiments

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) BARON GROTE,

The Hon. C. D. B. KING,  
Secretary of State, R. L.,  
Monrovia.

Imperial German Consul.

His Excellency,  
Hon. C. D. B. KING,  
Secretary of State of the  
Republic of Liberia,  
Monrovia

German Claims Commission,  
Monrovia,  
April 21st, 1913.

Sir,

Referring to your communication of the 15th instant, I have the honour to state that your reply to my communication of the 13th instant discloses that you did not understand the idea I intended to convey in my said letter. I am fully aware of the fact that your Government could not make any suggestions with regard to the work of the commission or give any instructions thereon. I wanted to know whether the action of Mr. Specht and the request of the German Consul (whose letter I enclosed for your information) met with the approval of your Government.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. ODIN,

Chairman, German Claims Commission

No. 232.

Local.

Sir,

Department of State,  
Monrovia, Liberia,

April 21st, 1913.

By direction of His Excellency, the Secretary of State, I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of to-day's date with reference to the request made by Baron Grote, Imperial German Consul in this city, for the delay of the decision in the matter of the German Claims Commission; and in reply, I beg to state that as the Liberian Government was not informed, and is therefore not cognizant of the reasons which actuated the Imperial German Consul to make this request, it cannot concur therein, and does not approve of the delay requested.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JOSEPH J. SHARP,

J ODIN, Esq.,

Assistant Secretary of State, R. L.

Chairman, German Claims Commission,  
Monrovia.

No. 233.  
Local.

Department of State,  
Monrovia, Liberia,  
April 23rd, 1913.

Sir,

I have the honour, by direction of His Excellency, the Secretary of State, to inform you that a covering letter is necessary in order to complete the work of the commission and the submission of their findings in an official form and manner. This opinion of the Secretary has also been intimated to Mr. Cooper, the Liberian Member.

With the assurances of my highest consideration and esteem.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JOSEPH J. SHARP,

Assistant Secretary of State.

Mr. J. ODIN,  
Chairman, German Claims Commission,  
Monrovia.

To His Excellency,  
The Secretary of State,  
Republic of Liberia.

Monrovia, Liberia,  
April 23rd, 1913.

Sir,

We have the honour to submit the enclosed documents, consisting of a complete record and finding of the German Claims Commission in re claims of German Merchants for losses sustained at Brewerville and in the recent Kroo uprising in the county of Grand Bassa.

The records show that the total amount of losses sustained by German firms is \$5,601.77, as follows:—

A. Woermann, Brewerville .....	\$838.77
A. Woermann, Grand Bassa and River Cess .....	2518.66
Vietor & Huber, Grand Bassa .....	254.44
Breman Kolonial Handelgesellschaft, G.B.C. ....	—
J. W. West, Grand Bassa and River Cess .....	1989.90
Total .....	<u>\$5601.77</u>

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servants,

(Signed) J. ODIN,

Chairman.

(Signed) JAS. F. COOPER,

Liberian Member.

No. 240.  
Local.

Department of State,  
Monrovia, Liberia,  
April 24th, 1913.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the complete record and findings, duly signed and submitted to the Government of Liberia, as the result of your judicious consideration of the claims of German Merchants for losses alleged to have been sustained at Brewerville and from the recent Kroo uprising in the county of Grand Bassa.

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It gives me great pleasure, on the conclusion of this important matter, to express to you, on behalf of the Government of Liberia, their high appreciation for the valuable service you have so faithfully rendered, and for which you have their sincere thanks.

You will please accept the assurances of my profound respects and esteem.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,

*Secretary of State.*

J. A. J. ODIN, Esq.,

*Chairman, German Claims Commission,  
Monrovia.*

No. 244.

Local.

Department of State,

Monrovia, Liberia,

*April 24th, 1918.*

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the complete records and findings, duly signed and submitted to the Government of Liberia, as the result of your judicious consideration of the claims of German Merchants for losses alleged to have been sustained at Brewerville and from the recent Kroo uprising in the county of Grand Bassa.

It gives me great pleasure, on the conclusion of this important matter, to express to you on behalf of the Government of Liberia their high appreciation for the valuable service you have so faithfully rendered, and for which you have their sincere thanks.

You will please accept the assurances of my profound respects and esteem.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,

*Secretary of State.*

J. F. COOPER, Esq.,

*Liberian Member,  
German Claims Commission,  
Monrovia.*

## APPENDIX "B."



### HISTORICAL QUESTIONS.

1. On what lines is Liberia to develop?
2. As a governing people what duty do we owe to ourselves?
3. How long is it since the country became inhabited by our forefathers? Where did they come from?
4. Who were the first arrivals? Who were the first invaders?
5. What race is supposed to be the oldest on earth? State opinion of Geologists and other Scientific men concerning the Negro race.
6. Where are found monuments more ancient than the oldest Egyptian monuments? What race inspired civilization?
7. What is the extent of the ancient wall of Grand Cape Mount, where does it lie, and about how long has it existed? How long is it supposed to have existed before the birth of Christ?
8. The Negro Race is believed to have consisted of how many groups and how many languages were spoken by them?
9. Who are the Golas? Give description.
10. What was the extent of the Gola Kingdom?



### HISTORY QUESTIONS II.

1. Who are the Kumbas; give brief history? Give date of their coming. Give names of their leaders.
2. Name tribes that compose Kumba group and state why? Name oldest tribes in Liberia.
3. What kind of Government did the Kumbas establish; name divisions and state how King and Elders were appointed to office?
4. Give short history of the Porro and its use. How did towns receive their names and give example?
5. State all that the Kumbas introduced amongst the Golas and how the smith's bellows were made.
6. Who introduced the art of spinning cotton and weaving it into cloth, and give reason why it was not the Arabs?
7. Give name of first European who visited our coast, and date of visit. From the narrative of Hanno, what opinion has been formed of the natives on our coast?
8. What articles were exchanged by our forefathers with the Europeans for their goods in the fourteenth century? State what kind of produce was brought by the Europeans for native produce.
9. Who were next to visit our coast after the Carthaginians and when?
10. Give short history of the progress made by the people in the arts of manufacture and farming in the fourteenth century, and state why there is a contrast between conditions in those early days and those at present.

### HISTORY QUESTIONS III.

1. What is the religion of the African? Give the creed.
2. Did any other people have similar belief? State how and where it may be found. Did our forefathers look to the stone and wood for help?
3. What is fetishism? Where is the word derived from and what is the opinion of succeeding students?
4. Give origin of religion in the world and how it made its way all over the continents.
5. What is an ordeal? Name a few African ordeals.
6. Give brief statement of the hot iron and Gbattow ordeals.
7. What is the Nomonia? Give brief statement. How long has the Nomonia been in the country and by whom was it carved?



### HISTORY QUESTIONS IV.

1. Who are the Kwias? Name the leaders of the Grebo tribe, and give date of the coming of the Krus and the Gedeboes.
2. Who are the Mandingoes? Give date of the arrival of the Mandingoes and the Vais in the country.
3. Name the tribes that composed the Mandingoes and Kwia groups? Say where the original homes of these groups were situated.
4. Give date of the first arrival of the Congoes in Liberia and say how they got here. What was the sum of money appropriated by the United States Government for their upkeep, and how were they fed at the hands of their guardians, and how was the money utilised?
5. Name some of the leading men in each tribe.
6. Give short history of the marriage customs of the Kumbas and other tribes.
7. What may be some of the important advantages in this system of marriage?



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